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STUDIES IN THE RELIGIONS OF THE EAST

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STUDIES IN THE RELIGIONS OF THE EAST

BY

ALFRED S. GEDEN

M.A., D.D.

TUTOR IN HEBREW AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE AT THE WESLEYAN COLLEGE, RICHMOND

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY

AUTHOR OF
'OUTLINES OF INTRODUCTION TO THE HEBREW BIBLE';

TRANSLATOR OF P. DEUSSEN'S 'PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS'

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CHARLES H. KELLY

25-35 CITY ROAD, AND 26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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To

My Fellow Students

Past and Present

of Richmond College

PREFACE

For the most part in form as well as in substance the chapters that follow have been delivered as lectures in the course of my duties at the Wesleyan College, Richmond. If in any instance slight repetitions of statement should be found to occur, this must be my apology. I have thought it better to allow them to stand, rather than diligently to prune away every reiteration, believing that more would thereby be lost in freshness and emphasis than would be gained in condensation. If there are such examples I trust they will be found neither lengthy nor numerous. For a considerable time volumes that were published some years ago of 'Studies in Comparative Religion' and 'Studies in Eastern Religions' have been overdue for recasting and revision. In extenuation of a delay that I regret may I plead the greatness of the field to be covered? The present also will, I hope, vindicate its claim to be practically a new work. To those who received the earlier 'Studies' with so much generous appreciation and consideration the difference between the earlier and the later will be apparent on every page. I should like to take this opportunity of offering my sincere thanks to many who have helped me, sometimes unconsciously, by suggestion and criticism. Chapters have been added on Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism, in the hope of rendering the work more serviceable to those who are studying for the examinations of the London University.

Perhaps I may be allowed also to restate a view and conviction to which I gave expression in one of the former volumes, and which has guided me both in the selection of the religions to be discussed and in the proportion and method of treatment adopted. The decisive consideration in such selection is as it appears to me the comparative importance of the faith in human history, and its influence in the formation and edification of a moral and religious life. The omission of a formal discussion of Judaism, and yet more of Christianity from such a programme will probably seem strange and unwarranted. Both however have been constantly in view; their direct inclusion would have expanded one volume into two or more, and in effect would but have reiterated facts and conclusions that recent works have most fully and effectively set forth. The drift and tendency however of much recent literature on these themes is seriously at fault, when it confines itself so largely to prospecting the sources from which the many forms of religious creed and life have or may have been developed. That a true understanding of *origins* is of the first importance cannot be denied; for apart from this every historical inference rests upon an unstable and shifting foundation. But to confine the study of Comparative Religion to a mere inquisition into origins and primitive usage or belief is like judging of the perfect fruit by a dissection of the immature embryo. The crude beliefs of savages, their fancies and their folk-lore, their ceremonies and customs, are of much interest, and often point to something wiser and nobler. But when they have all been marshalled in order, classified and labelled, scarcely an approach has been made to the building up of a sound doctrine

of Comparative Religion. Account must further be taken of the most refined doctrines, the most spiritual processes and aspirations of the religious mind and thought of mankind. The latter task is incomparably the more difficult. It will demand the most consummate judgement, the widest sympathy and power of co-ordination. When it has been essayed and successfully achieved Comparative Religion will have justified her claim to hold among the sciences the foremost rank and place.

I have endeavoured also to keep in touch with the literature on each and every subject that has been passed under review; and I would fain hope that no important book or article has escaped notice. Absence of reference to any work must not be assumed to imply ignorance or depreciation of its worth. The literary output however, especially in relation to India and the further East, is so great that limitations of time and strength render it almost impossible to cope with it. Even while these pages are passing through the press works of the greatest significance and importance have appeared, to which I should have wished to accord more than a brief and incidental reference. Especially in regard to the S'aiva-Siddhānta creed in the south of India, the summary of doctrine given by R. W. Frazer in his article on the southern Dravidians in the fifth volume of the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, and more particularly the exhaustive and scholarly work of H. W. Schomerus, *Der Śaiva Siddhānta eine Mystik Indiens*, Leipzig, 1912, have perhaps for the first time placed within the reach of the European student the opportunity of appraising the full worth of those more popular forms of creed and faith which in practice are at least as influential on Indian life and thought as systems derived

directly from the Veda. The brief bibliographies appended to the chapters do not as a rule repeat the names of works of which mention is made in the course of the chapters themselves. The aim has been rather to offer for further study a selection of the more important and accessible works on each subject, than to multiply references to a large number of books which in great part would probably be beyond the reach of most students.

With the same object in view the Indices have been made as complete as practicable. That a work involving so many citations and numbers should have altogether escaped oversights and errors is more than I may venture to hope. If any readers to whose notice these may be brought will indicate them to me, it is hardly needful to say that I shall be most grateful.

In the transliteration of Sanskrit and other words the system adopted and recommended by the Royal Asiatic Society has ordinarily been followed. Consonants are to be pronounced as in English, vowels as in Italian. The use of diacritical marks has been avoided as far as possible. *C′* is the English *ch* as in *ch*urch; *ś* is *sh*; *g* is always hard. In compound consonants, each element is distinctly and separately pronounced; *e.g. ch* as in chur*ch-h*ouse; *kh* as in in*k-h*orn; *ph* as in u*ph*ill; *th* as in boa*t-h*ook. In Sanskrit compounds of which the second member is *v*, this letter has the sound of *w*, except after *r*. The dental *d* is the English soft *th* as in *th*ough; the cerebral *ḍ* is nearly the English *d*; *t* and *ṭ* have practically the same pronunciation. Of the Sanskrit vowels *e o* are always long; *a i u* short unless otherwise marked. The first of these however is never the English short *ă* as in r*a*t, a sound which is not found in the Indian languages;

but always the obscure vowel heard in c*u*t, d*o*zen, *u*pper. *Ai*, *ou* are the diphthongs in *ai*sle, l*ou*d. *Ri* is also a vowel, and is pronounced in South India at least as rü, nearly as in cr*oo*ked; *ṛī* is the same sound lengthened, as in cr*oo*n. The sign ṛ, which has sometimes been adopted to represent this sound, obscures its character as a vowel. It has seemed preferable therefore to write ṛi, or where possible to distinguish by printing *ri* in italics.

If these brief chapters may in some measure help forward a true understanding of the rich thought of the East, and a fuller appreciation of the religious character and aspirations and needs of their peoples, and may indicate how much of living interest and importance is to be found therein, the aim of the author will have been accomplished. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be allowed to dedicate them, as the earlier 'Studies,' to those my fellow students, with whom I have shared so many hours in a study that I trust has been not unprofitable, and has led us to interpret with greater sympathy and insight the manifold endeavours of the human mind and heart to gain a knowledge of the truth.

A. S. GEDEN.

RICHMOND,

June, 1913.

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ABBREVIATIONS

THE contractions and abbreviations employed are those which are usual, and will be found in general to be self-explanatory. For the sake of brevity and convenience the following are used in the citation of the titles of journals and other books:—

CMSI = Church Missionary Society Intelligencer.
EHI = Early History of India.
ERE = Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.
GIAP = Grundriss der indo-arischen Philologie und Alterthumskunde.
HF = Harvest Field.
IA = Indian Antiquary.
ICHR = International Congress of the History of Religions.
ICR = Indian Census Report.
IGI = Imperial Gazetteer of India.
JRAS = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
PEFQ = Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement.
PSBA = Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology.
SBE = Sacred Books of the East.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: ORIGINS

THE student of Origins and of Comparative Religion has before him a subject of the widest range and of the greatest complexity. He will find himself called upon to form an opinion, and perhaps to pronounce judgement, upon matters of high import, which touch the most vital interests of mankind, and excite their strongest sympathies or aversion. In the presence of keenly-debated questions he must be prepared to lay aside all prepossessions, and to bring to bear all the qualities of patience, impartiality, and insight in the endeavour to secure a definitive solution, which shall be based not on speculation, but on the broad facts of human experience. To him nothing will be alien, nothing irrelevant; from all sides he will welcome light, will seek to co-ordinate every aspect of truth, and will formulate his conclusions only after the closest and most patient examination, and a research that at least endeavours to gather in the harvest of all related fact. Hasty generalisations above all he will eschew; recognising that the varieties of human thought and belief are infinite, and that the modes in which man has given expression to his thought may be expected to be characterized by no less extreme diversity. And if he can trace common principles underlying divergent practices, and evolve a comprehensive and coherent theory from the conflicting observances and the multitude

Comparative Religion

of more or less reasoned opinions that come under his notice, he will have contributed in no small degree to the enlargement of his own sympathies and appreciation, and to the better understanding of that greatest and most complex subject of investigation and study, man himself in his relation to God.

Definition

A primary difficulty is that of definition. The importance of clearly and accurately defining the field of investigation cannot be over-estimated; and to mark out its limits will afford a measure of the task that lies before the student. By 'Comparative Religion,' or as some prefer to phrase it 'The Comparative Study of Religion,' is meant the study of the various forms of religious belief which are or have been conceived and formulated in more or less definite shape,—no less those that are primitive and inchoate than those which are elaborate and reasoned expressions of the deepest feeling and faith; with the view not merely of recording facts, but of analysing, comparing, making trial of the principles on which each creed rests, disentangling the true from the false and thus arriving at a complete and consistent knowledge of the mind and religious consciousness of man in its movement towards God. As Comparative Grammar sets side by side the grammatical structure and habit of various languages that it may ascertain that which is common to all, and may trace out the general principles of Grammar on which all are founded; or as Comparative Science deals not with one science alone, but with all sciences in their mutual relationships; so Comparative Religion seeks to bring all systems of religion together, even the outlying and most loosely defined beliefs of savages, that it may harmonise them, detect the essential and

reject the mistaken and false, and may expound the abiding laws and principles on which the human mind has worked in its search for the truth.

If, then, it be a fact that the most profound as well as the earliest consciousness of the human heart is a sense of dependence upon a higher power, and that religion is ultimately the expression of this dependence, then the science and study of Comparative Religion has no peer. It is the broadest and most comprehensive, as it is the most important study in which man can engage. The nature of the divine and human, not separately, but together and in harmonious working, is its province. Philosophy is its handmaid; and contributes an indispensable element to its investigations. Some knowledge of the methods and conclusions of Anthropology, which deals with man in his external and physical character and relations, is essential to a just estimate of the mutual influence of spirit and material body in their conjoint history and development. Psychology seeks to explain the nature and to classify and account for the phenomena of the primary member of the strange duality of which man finds himself composed, and aids the science of Comparative Religion to comprehend its *data*. And Theology, working from the opposite point of view, endeavours to set forth the nature and attributes of that supreme power that religion craves to know; and so supplies the complement to the exposition of the complex nature of man, in which Psychology and Anthropology join. All declare their conclusions, the fruits of their toil, and Comparative Religion takes account of, and utilises all.

Importance of the Study

That such an inquiry, so broad in space and time,

should ever exhaust itself or attain finality, may well be declared impossible. It can only begin at the beginning, with the ultimate and primitive beliefs of man, if such can be found ; and trace them onwards, in their manifold ramifications and wayward development, until they reach their crown and highest manifestation in the great religions of the world, Brāhmanism with Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism. Beyond these it may more or less reasonably and surely forecast. To confine the attention to ' Origins ' merely is a mistake ; and has led in the past to much misapprehension, and to undue importance being attached to details and primitive tendencies, which are like the rootlets of a great tree, essential to its being and growth, but not comparable for significance and beauty to the branches or the foliage or the fruit. To know what religion is and what it can effect its broadest and richest manifestations in history must be studied. These will be passed briefly in review in the following pages.

Early Religious Thought

Man in the most primitive and barbarous condition in which he is found has been shown to be possessed of a rudimentary religious instinct or sense, capable of being educed and led upwards. His *differentia* from the brutes, one at least of the characteristics by which he stands apart, is his capacity and inclination for worship ; for forming some practical conception of a higher power, with which he conceives himself to be in some kind of relation, to which he owes reverence, and from which he hopes for good or deprecates evil. The earliest and most primitive, as well as the most complete and subtle and refined of man's essays in religious life and thought have been his

endeavours to express, to formulate in word and practice his belief in that power and his duty thereto. It is scientifically demonstrable that there is no people, as far as our knowledge extends, so inert and degraded as to be without some conception of a God. Or, as it might perhaps be more exactly expressed, into whose reflective mind there has never entered the thought of a higher power external to themselves, apprehended, it may be, only in hazy and ill-outlined fashion, but always real; a power that can help or injure, and to which reverence and service are due.[1] The lowest most ignorant savage conceives of spirits, ghosts, fetiches in some form or another. Probe him to the bottom, and you arrive at the idea or ideas that the world of living beings which he touches and sees does not exhaust the sum total of existence. There is something beside and beyond, to which he can only perhaps give a fanciful name, or no name at all, but which is as real to his perception as the comrade who stands by his side. This conclusion has, as is well known, been challenged and contradicted. Travellers have returned home, bringing in absolute good faith reports of tribes and peoples, in whom they declared themselves unable to discover the faintest trace of a belief in the supernatural; men who were asserted to be as destitute of any conception of a divine or semi-divine power as the flowers and trees, the rocks and streams, amongst which they dwelt. In every case, however, in which a thorough examination and sifting of the evidence has been practicable,

[1] Religious ideas of one kind or other are almost universal. . . . The universality of religious ideas, their independent evolution among different primitive races, unite in showing that their source must be deep-seated instead of superficial.—Herbert Spencer.

it has been proved that the report was mistaken. Nor was the source of the error far to seek. When not the fruit of conscious or unconscious bias, it has been generally traceable to one of two causes : on the one hand, to imperfect acquaintance on the part of the traveller with the language and habits of the people referred to, so that either his questions were unintelligible to them, or their answers unintelligible to him, perhaps both ; on the other, to the natural timidity and reserve which savages, like children, manifest in the presence of comparative strangers. Instances have been known where for years such peoples will conceal their religious practices and beliefs from men of another race living in their midst ; they have refused to confide their inmost thoughts and convictions to an unsympathetic and possibly contemptuous interrogator. It may not unfairly be assumed that, in the few remaining examples where complete evidence or refutation is not forthcoming, the reported atheism of a tribe or nation is not real, but merely the reflection and hasty conclusion of imperfect knowledge.[1]

[1] Cp. F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*[4], p. 7—' This point (i.e. that " there never was a time in the history of man when he was without religion ") we have no intention of discussing, because, as every anthropologist knows, it has now gone to the limbo of dead controversies. Writers approaching the subject from such different points of view as Professor Tylor, Max Müller, Ratzel . . . all agree that there are no races, however rude, which are destitute of all idea of religion ' ; and G. d'Alviella in *ERE*, i. p. 536a, on the universal belief in the existence and survival of human souls, and the possibility of intercommunication between them and the living. Those who have come into close touch with primitive peoples are of one mind on this subject; see *e.g.* R. L. Nassau, *Fetichism in West Africa*, p. 33 ff.—' at the bottom of African fetichism there is the fundamental belief in the existence of God and in the reality of the human soul.' Cp. Andrew Lang, *Making of Religion*[2], London,

Nor from an estimate of the forces that have moulded the character and determined the form of the religious beliefs of mankind must his varied external environment be omitted. The paramount influence which outward circumstances of climate and situation, the need for daily provision and the pressure of competition or danger, the physical constitution of his own nature and of his immediate surroundings, have exercised on the bodily functions and faculties is of course recognised on all hands. Physically he is what he is as the result of countless natural forces which have acted upon him and upon his ancestors through all the preceding generations. It is not perhaps at once so obvious that the mind, in its growth and development, has been submitted to a similar and corresponding process of mental stimulus and reaction. The spiritual and mental evolution of the man, far from being a solitary and independent growth, has been influenced and conditioned at every turn by his environment and the forces brought to bear upon him. And among the consequences of this intimate association and constant interdependence has been the reaction of mental habit and environment upon the body; and conversely physical conditions and forces have left and do leave their mark upon the mind. The essential difference would seem to be not that the one is affected and the other unaffected by external conditions whether physical or mental or spiritual; but that in presence of these conditions the body cannot be other than entirely passive, recipient of impressions which of itself it has no power to reject or modify. The mind,

Influence of Environment

1900; Max Müller, *Anthropological Religion*, p. 171 f.; Prof. Macalister in *LQR*, July, 1899, p. 7 f.; etc.

on the other hand, within certain limits possesses the faculty of choice, exercises initiative, and amongst innumerable forces and impressions yields itself to some, and resists or refuses to entertain others. In the review of the lower forms of religion at least it will be abundantly manifest that they bear upon them clear tokens of the effect of the environment amidst which they have come into existence. And of the higher and more complex systems that holds good, which is a familiar truism with regard to the individual thinker or agent, that *circumstances* have played a large if not the prevailing part in determining the form which they should at any moment assume. The other factor in the formation of systems of religious thought and practice has been the individual himself, whether he has borne the name of founder, reformer, or merely teacher and guide. Upon his personality and initiative, his force of character and power of impressing others, has depended the extent and permanence of the contribution which he has made to a religious history that at every point has come under the influences of the ever-changing environment by which it has been encompassed.

Appreciation of alien Faiths

It is worth while also to note briefly how profound and universal a change has come upon the attitude of thinkers in general, and Christian thinkers in particular, towards the alien faiths and the religious postulates of the outside world during the last half century. The change has been wholly in the direction of sympathy and intelligent appreciation. Where too frequently in former years there was mere denunciation of error, or a tacit assumption that strange creeds were not worth investigation, there is keen interest and a

genuine attempt to understand the mind that works in religious ways other than our own. It is due in Great Britain to the efforts and writings of the late Professor Max Müller and other pioneers of the science of Comparative Religion that the position of thinking men, themselves convinced of the truth of Christianity, has been so greatly modified with regard to other forms of religious belief. Those who maintain most firmly the unique position and rights of the Christian faith concede freely to-day that in all the more important systems of religion there is a measure of truth,—some aspect or detail of truth seized and emphasized, which has been the salt of the system, and in spite of all accretions of error has made it *live*, a vital force in the hearts and lives of its professors. How far this may be asserted of the primitive and inchoate beliefs of savage tribes may be open to question. Many scholars and thinkers would affirm it as confidently of these. But at least in all the chief religious systems of the world that have commanded the allegiance of thoughtful men there is a measure and degree of truth, a greater or less possession of that which is of permanent significance and worth. The consciousness of mankind, in all its varied development, has not gone wholly and hopelessly out of the way in its search after God.

The capacity, however, and the readiness to recognise truth when it appears in other guise than that which is familiar and formulated in a familiar creed need not, and ought not, to lessen the hold which the faith which is professed has upon the heart and life. In the name of a false and mistaken charity and broadmindedness there has even been a tendency to exalt other religions at the expense of Christianity. The mistake is fatal to a

just appreciation of any or all. It is open, no doubt, to any one to maintain the supreme and unapproached excellence of a given religious faith ; and in the nature of things there can be but one *perfect* form or revelation of divine truth. It is probable, however, that there will be many that are imperfect and partial, that share in the truth, although they may not exhibit it undimmed and complete. It would, therefore, argue a poor faith in the validity and claims of any creed or system to refuse to submit it to the searchlight of history, of reason, and of science. Beliefs or practices which will not stand that test are not of the truth, from whatever other source they may have sprung. It is, moreover, a narrow mental and spiritual outlook which is unsolicitous about, or uninterested in the beliefs and hopes of other peoples ; who guard their own faith with as intense and jealous an affection as we do ours. Nor ought the fact to be ignored that if by its adherents a claim to the highest position is made for Christianity, there are many, not all ignorant or uncultured men, who place on a similarly high and lofty pedestal Buddhism, or the service of the prophet of Islām,—the creed, whatever it may be, which has grown into their hearts and lives from their very birth.

Principles of Investigation

It is essential, therefore, that the standpoint assumed be that of purely historical investigation, which takes nothing for granted, and allows nothing to pass unscrutinised. That the attempt at least be made to work solely by induction from ascertained facts as to the early or later religious beliefs of men, and under all circumstances to shun ready-made theories. If speculation and hypothesis refuse to be altogether excluded, it

will be desirable to assign them as narrow a sphere and as limited an exercise as possible. There will follow a review of the chief formal religions of the world in the light of their origin and development, their growth, and if necessary decline; of the various systems of human belief compared one with another, presenting points of likeness and unlikeness, and exhibiting the different methods and ways in which the mind of man has approached the supreme question of how to find God. For the sake of precision, therefore, it will be necessary to define, if only provisionally, the object that is to be kept in view. The *Origins* of religion are first to be reviewed, the early efforts of man towards the light, the way or ways in which he has endeavoured to determine the all-important question of his relationship to an unseen power, and of the nature of that power. The next step will be the investigation of the evidence for the crystallization of these beliefs into the various religious systems, and of the work of their founders and teachers in moulding thought and directing action. Lastly, the systems themselves must be examined, their influence on one another and on the outside world.

Contents and Scope of Comparative Religion

A brief definition, then, of the bearing and scope of Comparative Religion, which is neither exhaustive nor beyond the reach of criticism, would set forth that by the term itself is meant nothing more than a systematic endeavour to classify the various religions of the world, to ascertain their mutual relationship, with the common principles and ideas, if any, which they presuppose, and to present an orderly and historical account of human belief and practice with regard to the supernatural and the unseen.

The further question will then more readily be answered, What is Religion? For this is a term which has been as variously defined and expounded as the nature of man himself,—definitions that have often perplexed rather than elucidated the meaning; from the classic interpretation of Cicero[1] down through the numerous suggestions or explanations put forward, which have rather seized upon some peculiar or unique characteristic of the subject than conveyed a knowledge of the subject itself. In ordinary language, however, the word seems to be used to express a more or less systematized and organised collection of ideas on man's relation to a power external to himself, to which he owes obligation, and from which he deprecates injury or hopes for favour. Sometimes, however, the word, or its derivatives, is employed to denote the faculty that takes cognisance of such ideas. Not that all the conceptions referred to are present in every case in the same degree; or that in the absence of one or more of them we must refuse to concede the existence of a religion at all. On the contrary, in savage and even civilised peoples ideas are often rudimentary and vague, which are yet capable of high and spiritual development. It would not be difficult so to contract and hedge about the definition of religion as to exclude such as these. It would, however, be a mistake on the lower ground of expediency, as well as on the higher of right. Provisionally, at least, it will be well to lay as little restriction as possible upon the scope of an inquiry

[1] Qui autem omnia, quae ad cultum deorum pertinent, diligenter retractarent et tanquam relegerent, sunt dicti religiosi ex relegendo, ut elegantes ex eligendo, ex diligendo diligentes, ex intellegendo intellegentes. His enim in verbis omnibus inest vis legendi eadem quae in religioso.—*De Natura Deorum*, ii. 28.

which touches human nature at every point, and to give to its terms the widest and most generous interpretation that is consistent with a strictly scientific and orderly method of procedure.

Origin of the Religious Sense

Among the most interesting of the questions that concern the *primordia* of mankind, the dawn of his mental and spiritual history, is that of the origin of man's religious sense. Assuming, as we are now entitled to do, that rudimentary ideas of this order form part of the mental equipment of man wherever and whenever he is found, how did he come by them? Along what path did the human mind and thought move, and by what road had it travelled, when it first emerged into the light, and of its store of conceptions, more or less dimly and tentatively perceived, that of the supernatural became a part? The question may, and probably will prove to be unanswerable. Not by one road, but by many did man reach forward into the unknown. A discussion of the problem, however, is not to be condemned as unprofitable because it is hardly likely that it will be able to arrive at definite or universally accepted conclusions. The answer moreover will, it is evident, be as dependent upon a true psychology, a clear and definitive understanding of the nature of man, as upon a rigorous and scientific history of religious belief.

The investigation cannot be prejudged or set aside by the postulate of a primitive revelation from without. Such a doctrine of revelation would be in harmony with the theory that the early religious beliefs of mankind were of a comparatively high order, and only became dim and perverted in the course of the ages, with the incessant struggle

for existence, and the pressure upon him of his physical surroundings; and would not be incompatible with the contrary or rival doctrine that his store of religious or spiritual conceptions was of the most scanty and slender description, potential rather than actual, and that from a very low plane of spiritual discernment he raised himself, by the exercise of faculties of which he found himself possessed, to higher and ever higher degrees of knowledge and insight. Perhaps it is hardly right to use the expression spiritual discernment of man in such a case. The spiritual faculties were dormant, a hope and promise of the future, rather than a realised possession of the present. The direction of evolution however was upward, a progression on the whole to better things, not a retrogression to lower and darker modes of thought and belief. Both these theories of man's early religious history have been and are held. The decision between them will be dependent upon the elucidation of evidence and of fact. Neither theory, it is evident, precludes a 'revelation' from without. Both indeed in one sense presuppose it,—the one complete, unique, final; the other partial, progressive, developing. They do not exclude one another; and it may very well prove to be the case that the truth will be found to lie between the two extremes.

Belief in the Survival of the Soul

A study also of the ideas and reasonings of the primitive undeveloped human mind, as far as this lies open to investigation, has led to the conclusion that together with the vague conception of an unseen external power there exists an equally widespread, practically universal belief in the existence of the soul after death. Not in the immortality of the soul; for this was far too

elaborate and complex an idea for primitive man to entertain; to so distant a prospect it is most improbable that his thought ever reached forth. But that the somewhat within him which he knew as himself survived death, and in some form or other continued to live, appears to have been a very general postulate of early religious faith. To his thought death did not end all, either for himself or his friends. Whether as a dim reflection of this earthly life, or in a still more shadowy and rudely conceived existence, there was another sphere or spheres, mode or modes of being, where the dead repeated the conscious experiences of their earthly sojourn. Not that the primitive man of the hypothesis could have formulated these beliefs in words, or would have troubled to do so, if he had been able. They were inarticulate convictions rather than reasoned beliefs. As far, however, as our knowledge of the workings of the mind of man primitive and unimproved enables us to draw inferences with some degree of confidence, these two conceptions, of an external power and of the survival of the soul after death, are fundamental, and form the basis upon which are built up all the various structures of religious system and thought.

Behind these it would seem to be impossible certainly to go. What lay behind and before them may be guessed or conceived, but is not matter of experience or ascertainable conclusion from any known facts in the religious and mental history or state of mankind. They form the irreducible minimum of his religious equipment or store of religious ideas. Speculation, however, has been busy with the supremely interesting question as to the road or roads by which these conceptions,

and the thoughts and imaginings that centre around them, were reached. Is it possible to trace the lines along which the human mind travelled in its development until it reached the point at which first it becomes known to us? Or, in other words, can a reasonable and probable account be given of the origin of conceptions so striking and so universal? They clearly presuppose not a little in the way of meditation, imagining, thought. Is it practicable, in however rough and general a fashion, to write the history of these imaginings, to follow the movements and understand the reasonings of the mind in its early gropings after the truth? To the elucidation of this question many thinkers and scholars have addressed themselves during many years; and the labour and thought expended have not been in vain, although it cannot be said that any unanimous or even generally accepted conclusion has been reached. The most usually propounded theories with regard to the way in which man began to be religious may be described as three in number. They are clearly not mutually exclusive; and it is probable that to each and all some share in the result achieved should be ascribed.

Animism, Nature Worship

Dr. Tylor[1] has defined Animism as a 'belief in souls, and in a future state, in controlling deities and subordinate spirits, these doctrines practically resulting in some kind of active worship.'[2] It is permissible to hold that the definition is too broad and too advanced. It is at least beyond the reach of primitive man in his beginnings; and while an elastic and indefinite term may justly be extended to cover all that

[1] *Primitive Culture*[4], 2 vols., 1903.
[2] *Op. cit.*, i. p. 437.

Dr. Tylor includes here, an embryo animistic faith does not go nearly so far, and is much more uncertain and vague. The term is itself ambiguous, and perhaps open to objection on that account. Some authorities maintain that the fundamental ideas which it connotes are entirely impersonal, and in their lowest most primitive form represent a power or powers to which only in the vaguest and most indefinite way is even a local habitation and a name assigned,—the uncertain character and limitations of the belief being among the chief reasons that for so long and so often it has eluded observation. It is, however, in some form of nature worship, recognition of and reverence paid to the *phenomena* of the universe that the earliest manifestation of the religious instinct is seen. Upon primitive man, emerging into consciousness of himself and of the world around him, the most vivid and powerful impressions would be made, not by those things which appealed to his mental consciousness, which indeed existed for him rather in promise of the future than as an available asset or instrument for the present, but rather by those which concerned his external relationships, his need of food, of shelter, and the preservation of his life. To him the play of the lightning, the resistless roll of the flood, the mighty grip of the frost, or the headlong terror of the whirlwind betoken his gods; that is to say, powers outside of and beyond himself, which he is unable to control, but which seem to hold him fast in an unreasoning relentless grasp, and to make him the plaything of their caprice. To these, therefore, he naturally attributes a will and determination such as he is himself conscious of possessing. And it is thus that in the lowest forms of savage life, when the

whole energies are bent upon and absorbed in the endeavour to provide daily sustenance, or to meet daily peril, the instincts of self-preservation and of reverence find expression in attempts to avert the evil which experience has taught man the powers of nature may inflict, or to secure some good which they appear to him to be able to bestow. With such forces he comes into direct daily conflict. And in their presence he bows himself, since they are stronger than he, in worship and fear.

Personification of Nature Powers

To these, perhaps only at a later but still early stage of religious development, he ascribes a personality, and a benevolent or malevolent will. They come to represent to him living beings, rather than blind forces, who consciously determine this or that, and may be affected by his prayers and gifts. The process may be represented as one of more or less conscious inference, inasmuch as the only power of which he has any direct experience, namely his own, is as he knows and feels the outcome of a personal will and determination.[1] He himself works and acts as the result of the life within. By a kind of rough analogy, therefore, he ascribes to these objects or forces, which he sees in action around him, a kindred life, superior in some sort to his own, since their acts are greater and more effective. The doings of his fellow men he can understand. They are the product of beings like himself, neither mysterious nor more powerful. But the forces of nature work on a transcendently greater scale.

[1] Cp. H. Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion*, 1906, p. 72 : 'If we want to convince ourselves that any other beings have a conscious life, analogy alone can supply us with a basis for this assumption.'

There must, therefore, be in them a transcendently greater personality and life.

All this presupposes little or no reasoning or thought. It is merely the ascription of external forces to similar causes to those of which he is himself conscious within. The first movement towards higher and more refined conceptions will be made with reflection upon the meaning and relations of the facts and phenomena by which he is surrounded,—the how, the wherefore, and the whither of things present and visible. Speculation, it would appear, begins universally and always with ideas that belong to the sphere of religion and religious worship. The rudimentary awakenings of philosophical thought, the essays of scientific experiment, the elaborate culture of civilisation itself, have their roots in, and grow up from thoughts and aspirations which are ultimately and in their essence religious. Thus the mind of man ponders on, and endeavours to penetrate into the meaning and character of the powers of nature and of the universe arrayed and in action before it. May not these be the varied instruments and faculties of a yet higher and unseen power, whose behests they observe, and to which they are ever submissive, even as the hand and the foot, the eye and the ear, are obedient to the will of the man himself? The answer to this question, to the direct and simple reasoning of early thought, must almost of necessity be in the affirmative. It is the ultra-refinement of the old age of speculation, not its primitive and childlike freshness, which returns a negative. And the conclusion at once follows of belief in a god above and behind the forces of nature, whose servants they are, and to whom therefore must be transferred man's entire allegiance and worship

and fear ; a god or gods,—for it is not to be understood that at first this path would either naturally or inevitably lead to monotheism,—as much transcending in majesty and greatness the visible universe as it transcends the limited abilities of man ; but whom man meets and touches in thought, although he cannot lay hold of him with his bodily senses. In the view of many whose judgement is entitled to respect, it is on some such lines as these that the mind of man has travelled upwards to conceive of and to worship the unseen God in heaven.

It is, however, going too far to assume that in the first instance the conceptions formed by primitive man of the forces and phenomena around him necessarily ascribed to them a *personal* character. They were rather powers of a vaguely defined impersonal nature. And it has been argued with considerable force that it is from these and similar ideas that the conceptions have been developed of Supreme Beings, beyond and above the multitude of common gods ; whose chief characteristic is their remoteness and aloofness, and to whom no direct homage or worship is paid.[1]

Among many savage peoples traces of belief in a Power, thus exalted and supreme, have been found. It is rarely that the recognition of him amounts to more than a dim consciousness of his existence. From him nothing is to be feared ; and though he is universally regarded as beneficent, it does not seem that petitions for good are usually addressed to him. The energies of the people in worship and offerings and prayer are reserved for the inferior divinities whose attitude is more uncertain, and

[1] Cp. *e.g.* Andrew Lang, *Making of Religion*[2], ch. ix. ff. ; *Report of Census of India*, 1903, appendix to ch. viii. on Religion.

whose reasonable or unreasonable anger needs to be placated by sacrifice. The conception of the Supreme, therefore, tends to recede into the background, and his place in the consciousness and thought of men to be usurped by powers more immediately capable of inflicting harm, or more likely to interest themselves in conferring blessings.

Fetichism

From animism proper must be distinguished *Fetichism*, an early and widespread form of religious belief, which has its home among the tribes of the West Coast of Africa, and in a more or less modified form and under different names exists among practically all savage peoples. The term is a corruption of the Portuguese *feitiço*, from Latin *factitius*, and was introduced by the early Portuguese discoverers and traders to describe the superstitious beliefs and practices which they found among the natives of that part of Africa. A fetich is a material object which is conceived of as possessing an inherent magical virtue or power, and is invested therefore with a superstitious regard. It differs from an idol, in that the latter is the visible abode of a god, while to the fetich belongs a mysterious faculty or force, which is its own, and is not due to the advent or residence of an external power.[1] A similar and nearly-related form of belief is *Shamanism*, which takes its name from the *shaman*[2] or witch-doctor of Northern and Central Asia. The essential feature of the latter is the recognition of a human intermediary, the medicine-man or witch-doctor, through whom the will of the unseen powers may be

[1] Cp. R. L. Nassau, *Fetichism in West Africa*, London, 1904, *passim*.

[2] Sanskrit, *śramaṇa*, the ordinary title of a Buddhist ascetic or monk.

ascertained, and who acts as their mouthpiece and agent. It represents a more advanced stage of religious thought than at least the cruder and less developed forms of animism.[1]

Ancestor Worship

A second form, in which among primitive peoples feelings of reverence and adoration manifest themselves, is that of ancestor worship, the worship of the spirits of the dead, conceived of as under some conditions or other still alive. It is based, therefore, essentially upon a more or less clearly defined belief in the *non-mortality* of the soul ; and the maintenance of communion with a relative or friend, with whom the intercourse of daily life in this world has been broken by death, is regarded

[1] A term so wide and general as animism almost defies satisfactory definition. The following summary of the ' leading features of animism in India,' where this form of religious belief is perhaps most widely and variously developed, is given by Mr. H. H. Risley in *CIR*, 1903, p. 356 :—' It (*i.e.* animism) conceives of man as passing through life surrounded by a ghostly company of powers, elements, tendencies, mostly impersonal in their character, shapeless phantasms of which no image can be made and no definite idea can be formed. Some of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own : one presides over cholera, another over smallpox, another over cattle disease ; some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, others again are associated with rivers, whirlpools, waterfalls, or with strange pools hidden in the depths of the hills. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills which proceed from them. . . . The essence of all these practices is magic. If certain things are done decently and in order the powers of evil are rendered innocuous in a mechanical but infallible fashion. But the rites must be correctly performed, the magic formulae must be accurately pronounced, or else the desired effect will not be produced. . . . Animism . . . is that exceedingly crude form of religion in which magic is the predominant element.' Cp. also *Imp. Gazetteer of India, Indian Empire*, 1907, vol. i. p. 430 ff. ; and more generally E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*[4], London, 1903 ;

as in itself desirable, and for the mutual benefit alike of the living and the dead. By some this regard for the wellbeing of parents or ancestors in a future existence, which only gradually develops into a real worship, as among the Chinese, is considered to be an early and primitive form of religious belief, through which most if not all peoples have passed at some period of their mental and spiritual history.[1] It is apparently this natural affection, craving for continued recognition and existence, which lies at the foundation of the cult of ancestors; which is therefore to be distinguished from the worship of the dead in a broader sense, of deified men or women, who, for notable achievements or qualities during life, have been exalted after death to the position of gods, to whom an active reverence is paid. In some instances of the latter there may be present an affectionate regard for the dead, which is hardly different in kind or degree from the longing which follows a departed parent or grand-parent into the other world. The ancestor, however, is not, in the first instance at least, a god at all; nor is the reverential feeling towards him a true worship. It is rather of the nature of a craving for fellowship, for the sympathy and help which have been

A. C. Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism*, London, 1906; F. Max Müller, Gifford Lectures on *Natural Religion*, London, 1888; J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*[2], London, 1907 ff.; F. B. Jevons, *Introd. to the History of Religion*[4], London, 1908, chh. xiii. f., xvii.; Andrew Lang, *Making of Religion*[2], London, 1900; E. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. ii., London, 1908, pp. 595–97.

[1] Cp. Lewis Campbell, in relation to the Manes of Greece and Rome:—'The worship of the dead is . . . a phase through which all races of mankind that have attained to any historical importance have at some time passed.'—*Religion in Greek Literature*, p. 130.

withdrawn by the interposition of the event of death. The kindly feeling towards him is carried over into the other world, and bridges the gulf of death.

It is probable, therefore, that we should distinguish the spirit which lies at the foundation of true ancestor worship also from the dread of a ghostly return of the dead to work mischief towards, or otherwise interfere with the living. The latter is a fear widespread among savage and primitive peoples, which is more akin to spirit worship or animism generally than to a real ancestral cult. The reasoning that underlies it is probably on somewhat different lines. The death of a brother, or friend, or comrade-in-arms is a sensible and startling fact, which urgently demands explanation. Externally little alteration has taken place apart from the accidents of a violent death. The hands, the head, the breast, all the organs of the body are there unchanged ; nothing indeed differs, as far as the eye can see, from the living man of a few seconds before. But the breath is gone ; that mysterious, invisible, intangible something which vitalised the entire frame, and gave power of motion and action to the limbs ; and the nearest analogies to which were to be traced in the breath of the lower animals and the winds of the heaven. The whole apparent difference between the man living and the man dead is found to lie here,—in the latter there is no breath.

It was in this mysterious principle, the presence of which universally denoted life with all its activities and enjoyments, its absence the dullness and inertness of death, that primitive man detected the principle and secret of life. And since there was no reason to suppose that the breath perished when it left the body,—invisible before, it was neither

more nor less invisible now,—he would naturally conceive of it as still effective, still moving, still manifesting itself in activities of speech and action, but now withdrawn from his sight and contact.

The dread of the ghost then originates mainly from this its mysterious character, evading the grasp of the mind or bodily senses. While the man lived, the manifestations of his spirit were conducted only in ways familiar, and through the medium of a visible tangible body. Now he is dead, his invisible spirit is emancipated from all control, and there lie open to it endless possibilities of hurt and harm, which it may work entirely unseen. It is well, therefore, by offerings and worship to deprecate its wrath, and to endeavour to win its favour. But on the contrary the main, if not the sole thought that prompted at the first the worship of the ancestor, and is found predominant in all its manifestations, is the desire to maintain and perpetuate the bond of personal and family union, which during life has proved to be of so great mutual advantage.

The principal means by which communion between the dead ancestor and his living family and heir was maintained is the funeral feast, which with more or less elaborate attendant ceremonies is observed by all peoples, ancient and modern, among whom ancestor worship has prevailed. The tumultuous Irish wakes, the stately services for the dead in the Roman Catholic Church, the minutely ordered rites of the Hindu, and the impressive ceremonial of Chinese or Japanese worship, are all animated by the same spirit, and express essentially the same desire. The funeral feast, therefore, served in the first instance to supply the wants of the deceased in food and drink, as care was taken in other respects to furnish forth his burial with the furniture

and weapons which he would need in the other world, and even with wives or servants to minister to his wants. In the feast he shared with the other members of the family and declared his fellowship with them, as had been his wont during life ; while they, on their side, did honour to him by lavish expenditure of their goods and property, and by open manifestations of grief showed how greatly they missed him from their midst. A third motive was perhaps present in some cases, that of rendering the deceased man content with his lot, and thus to obviate the possibility that he might return to a home in which his place had been filled up, to the inconvenience of his successor. In course of time also the funeral feast, repeated on the anniversary of death, may often have been emptied to a large extent of its original significance, and become a mere form, or diverted to a different meaning. There can, however, be little doubt that these two motives are primary and fundamental, the natural desire for the maintenance of personal and family communion with the dead, and the wish to show to them to the fullest extent the respect and honour which are their due.

A third early and widespread form in which the religious instincts of man exhibit themselves is that of *Totemism*. By which term is to be understood the theory or system of religious belief and practice which holds sacred a particular class of animate or inanimate objects, usually the former ; the totem or object of regard being in most cases some well-known animal, which the tribe or people reverence, and after which they frequently give themselves a name. The word has been adopted from the language of the Ojibway Indians, amongst whom and the other

Totemism

Indian tribes of North America the system appears to have reached its greatest development. This peculiar form of belief is constantly met with among savage and uncivilised peoples at the present day ; and seems in the earlier periods of the world's history to have been yet more widely prevalent. The mythology and religious practices of ancient Egypt, for example, rest in many respects upon a basis of primitive totemism. The same is true of the Babylonians and the Assyrians. In the belief of some writers all Semitic peoples were originally totemistic. The available evidence no doubt falls far short of establishing so broad a conclusion. But with almost every advance in the right understanding of the conditions and habits of life among primitive men has come a clearer perception of the wide range of ideas and observances which are akin to totemism. Among the ancestors of the Greeks and Romans, of the Celts and Germans, traces of such beliefs have been found. On the continent of America, both North and South, the Indian tribes have been, probably without an exception, worshippers of the totem. On the other hand the Eskimo are distinguished, it is said, by the entire absence of these or similar conceptions. The native races of Australasia, both on the mainland and in the islands, the inhabitants of Fiji, Borneo, Sumatra, Java, and the neighbouring regions, are characterised by like beliefs. Amongst the forest tribes of Bengal and other parts of India, and the wild aboriginal peoples of China, Japan, and Formosa, religious customs still observed bear witness to a totemistic origin. And in Africa, both amongst the negroes of the West Coast, the Bechuanas of the South, and others, beliefs and practices of the same kind are maintained up to the present day.

There is evidence of the former existence of totemistic customs and habits of thought in most of the countries of Europe, including Great Britain. And the ancient literatures of the world almost without exception bear curious witness to the widespread prevalence of similar forms of belief.

The totem differs from an idol or fetich, in that the name is applied, not to this or that individual to the exclusion of all others, but equally to every member of a species or class, who are all held in precisely similar regard and honour. The wolf, the dog, the beaver, the bison, to give instances out of many that might be cited, were each the totem of a particular tribe or tribes in North America. And the relation in which a man stood to his totem was conceived to be of the same character as that between the individual and his fellow tribesmen, or the members of his own family. It was therefore a relation of mutual help, co-operation, and protection, the bond of which was often felt to be more close than even that of blood-relationship. Under hardly any circumstances will a man injure or destroy the object which is his totem [1]; he will cherish it, hold its life sacred, and seek to promote in every way its wellbeing. Correspondingly the

[1] Quite exceptionally, as part of a formal religious ceremony or festival, the totem animal will be slain, and its flesh consumed by the members of the clan in a common meal. Probably there underlay the practice the conception of a closer union thus realised between the totem and his human kith and kin. The common meal, however, formed no essential, indispensable part of a totemistic belief or observance. And there is no evidence that it ever held a place in other than a very small proportion of those who shared totemistic beliefs. Among some Australian tribes also, and probably elsewhere, although a man will not kill his totem to supply his own want, he will do so, and under certain circumstances is under obligation to do so, for another.

totem, though hostile and dangerous to all beside, will do no harm to the members of the clan or tribe whose totem it is, but will give them assistance, and provide for their safety and happiness. In some instances, the appearance of the totem is regarded as ominous of good or of evil. Often there is found to be a superstitious reluctance to use its name, to touch or even to look at it. Not improbably the law of *tabu* in the Polynesian Islands and elsewhere has its ultimate ground in, or at least is intimately connected with totemistic ideas. Sometimes also on anniversaries and special occasions, such as births marriages the festivals of the seasons etc., the tribesman will dress himself in the skin of his totem, and thus arrayed will posture and dance, or go through the prescribed ceremonies.[1]

Three different kinds or classes of totem are to be distinguished: (1) the *clan* totem, which is common to every member of a clan or tribe. (2) The *sex* totem, held sacred by every male or female respectively of the tribe, but with no relation to the opposite sex; this kind has hitherto been met with only in Australia.[2] (3) The *individual* totem, the peculiar and private possession of a single individual, unconnected with any other. Further, it would appear as though in some cases a clan or tribe has broken up into several sub-clans, each of which has adopted as its totem some part of the animal which was the totem of the whole clan. Thus have arisen families or tribes which regard the head, or the foot, or other portion of the body as sacred, as the totem, but not the entire animal.

[1] Compare the bear-dance described by George Catlin, *North American Indians*[9], 2 vols., London, 1857, i. p. 244 f.

[2] Andrew Lang, however, claims to have recognised sex totems in England; see a note in *Athenaeum*, April, 1909, p. 496.

Over and above its religious aspect, totemism also implies and demands the observance of certain social duties and restrictions. It is indeed not easy to determine whether the social conditions anticipated the religious, or vice versâ.[1] In practice they are always most closely associated together, and seem to co-exist universally. The most remarkable and persistent of these were with regard to marriage. The members of the same clan, having the same totem, might not intermarry. In other words, the totem family or clan was always exogamous; and frequently the restriction was carried further, and determined not only that a man must not marry within his own circle, as defined by the common totem, but that he must take a wife from one or other of certain totem groups which usage or local custom specified; and his children, according to the same varying custom, will among some peoples belong to the totem of their father, elsewhere to that of their mother, or even, as with certain tribes in Australia, to neither. The rules in this respect of exogamy which custom enjoins admit of no relaxation, and sometimes, as in parts of the Australian continent, are exceedingly complicated. Thus the observance and limitations of exogamy form a part of totemistic practice as far back as we are able to trace it, and universally at the present day. The two are inseparably conjoined in fact and experience, even if in thought they are distinct and may

Exogamy

[1] 'Totems in their earliest known stage had very little to do with religion, and probably in origin had nothing really religious about them.'—A. Lang, *Social Origins*, 1903, p. 138. Dr. Lang's judgement would not be accepted by all authorities. Its validity depends, of course, in part upon the definition given of religion.

possibly be independent in their origin. No explanation, however, of totemism as a whole, and as it is found to exist, can be satisfactory or complete which does not equally take into account exogamy; and any adequate or consistent account of the conceptions underlying the latter must not leave out of sight its universal association with totemistic beliefs and habits of life.

Of the many suggestions that have been offered in explanation of the origin of conceptions so remarkable peculiar and widespread none is completely satisfactory, or affords an entirely natural interpretation of the numerous problems and difficulties involved. It is probable that no single clue will be found adequate to elucidate all the obscurities that beset the subject. In so far as a single conception lies at the basis of all, it is probably to be traced in the thought of a common life shared in by animals and man; and the religious regard or bond of connection originating in this idea was afterwards extended to embrace plant-life, and by a further development other objects or phenomena to which in primitive thought a kind of consciousness or life was attributed. If this is correct, totemism is essentially and closely related to animism, and to a belief in the existence of souls and their reincarnation after they have left the human body. The animal form may be supposed to enshrine the spirit of a friend or kinsman deceased, and on that account must be treated with all the regard and consideration due to a living member of the clan. Nor would it be an unnatural or far-fetched extension of this idea which then conceived of all the members of a family or clan adopting after death by preference the form of a certain determined species or class of beings, animate or otherwise. These last then represented

the deceased constituents of the clan, as those still living were its human members. And the bond between each and all was that of a common descent and kinship, which on the human side forbade the particular relationship implied in endogamy.

The wider question of the origin of the custom of exogamy hardly falls to be considered here. It will be found discussed at length in works of the character of Andrew Lang's *Social Origins*, London, 1903, or Dr. E. Westermarck's *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, two volumes, London, 1906-08, and many others. Most writers seem to regard it as a special case of a more general law of natural selection ; but the conclusion is very questionable. The main theories which have been proposed with regard to the origin and prevalence of totemistic conceptions are as follows; some of these lay stress rather on the social, others on the religious aspect of the beliefs and practices in question. In view of the exceedingly varied nature in detail of the phenomena presented by totemism a single and comprehensive solution of the problem of its origin is hardly to be anticipated. It is more probable that the origin is to be sought in a combination of causes, working separately or in co-ordination.

(1) The totem is the home and habitation of the spirit, which has by choice or necessity become re-incarnate under this form after severance from the earthly body. The conceptions presupposed in totemism are therefore akin to those which gave rise to ancestor worship, animism, and the doctrine of transmigration of souls.

(2) The essential idea involved is that of the provision of an adequate supply of food for the community. To each section or group of persons was assigned the duty of making arrangements for the production of a particular kind of food, animal or vegetable, in quantities sufficient to satisfy the needs of all; and this object, for which it was their duty to care, became their totem. Dr. Frazer defined totemism as 'an organised and co-operative system of magic, designed to secure for the members of the community . . . a plentiful supply of all the commodities of which they stand in need, and . . . immunity from all the perils and dangers to which they are exposed.' Certain tribes in Australia do perform ceremonies which appear to be intended to secure the abundance or fruitfulness of particular

articles of food, on which the natives are dependent. By far the larger number of totems, however, are not objects that are or ever can have been eaten. In India, by the side of the lion, tiger, hyaena, and various kinds of insects and plants, are found amongst the aboriginal tribes groups which have adopted as their totem the moon, the rainbow, or a constellation, a precious metal such as gold, or even a day of the week, or a month of the year. The theory of 'food-supply' may be a *vera causa*, a real contributory motive. It is clearly inadequate, however, to account for totemism as a whole; and it offers no explanation of that which is its most striking and persistent characteristic, the rule of exogamy.

(3) For some unassigned reason, or by a freak of fancy, a group of persons adopted for themselves, and agreed to use henceforth, the name of some natural object, which should be their designation in common, and by which they should be known to others. The common name then became a real bond of union, and was interpreted as implying a natural relationship and community of descent; and this view of the meaning of the name gradually strengthened its hold, and attached to itself conceptions of special privilege belonging to members of the group, together with distrust of outsiders, until it developed into the law of exogamy with its elaborate code of rules and observances. The theory, attractive and probable enough in its working, seems to fail at the outset. No natural reason is suggested why a company of men, *ex hypothesi* primitive and savage, should thus enter into any agreement to designate themselves by a common name; and if this happened occasionally and sporadically, as it may without much difficulty be conceived to have done, it is not easy to think of it as occurring as widely and constantly as the universal prevalence of totemistic ideas demands. It is too artificial to answer to the needs and thoughts of the very early stages of primitive life in which totemism has its rise.

(4) The same objection, although perhaps not so forcibly, holds good against a similar theory, that the totem name was given to the family or group from outside as a 'nickname' in derision, or perhaps more rarely as a mark of honour. That such general names or titles have frequently been, and still are conferred is well known, and instances where the name has been adopted and become permanent are not unusual; it appears therefore sufficiently probable that often, although certainly not always, the *individual* totem may have been

suggested by the chance remark of a comrade. The theory however postulates too much; and it would hardly be claimed even by those who advance it that it adequately covers the ground, or supplies an explanation and motive for all the phenomena that totemism exhibits.

LITERATURE.—The literature of totemism is of a most varied and extensive character. One of the most recent and important discussions of the subject is by H. H. Risley in *Census Report of India*, Calcutta, 1903, p. 530 ff. The writer maintains the view that exogamy was adopted and perpetuated because it was found to be practically advantageous in the struggle for existence. The most complete and exhaustive survey will be found in the work of Dr. J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 4 vols., London, 1910, where numerous references to earlier literature and authorities are given; see especially the discussion on 'origin, etc.,' vol. iv. p. 40 ff. Cp. A. Lang, *Secret of the Totem*, London, 1905, and *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*, 2 vols., 1906, i. ch. iii.; J. Lubbock, *Marriage Totemism and Religion*, London, 1911; F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*[4], London, 1908, chh. ix., x.; S. Reinach, *Cultes, Mythes, et Religions*, 3 vols., Paris, 1905–1908. Of the last-named work a condensed translation into English has been published in one volume under the title *Cults, Myths, and Religions*, London, 1912.

Classification of Religions

Various essays have been made in the direction of a classification of religions, which should in due form exhibit their relationship and set forth their genealogy. The results, however, have not been altogether satisfactory. A more difficult subject, or one that submits itself less to the processes of a strict logic, it is not easy to conceive. By Professor Max Müller, who has done more than any other writer to promote in England the fair and dispassionate study of Comparative Religion, the view was maintained that the growth of religious thought moved on parallel lines with the development of

language, and that therefore a true science of the origin of speech would prove itself also a science of the evolution of religion. In which theory there resides at least this element of truth, however strange and unlikely it may appear in other respects: that at all times men lie much under the dominion of words, only the practised philosopher distinguishes readily and habitually between the object and its name, and peoples who are cousins in speech are very likely to be cousins also in thought. Further than this the evidence hardly carries us, and falls far short of establishing so wide a generalisation as that which would link together man's primitive attempts at language with his earliest ventures in the field of religious aspiration and thought. Philology, if this were true, would be the key to Comparative Religion. The key however only half turns the lock; and leaves the secret of the nature and birth of religious ideas still undisclosed.

Moreover, a just appreciation on the part of an outsider of the strange and unfamiliar modes of thought presented to him in a novel religious system is most difficult. It is in most instances the work of years, and demands a rare temperament and ability, for a man to be able to place himself in sympathetic relation with the doctrines and precepts of a foreign faith, to realise its essential principles, to comprehend and adopt the point of view of its professors. Short of this a genuinely instructive and complete account of any, even the lowest religious system can hardly be rendered. Few indeed are the outsiders, the non-Christians, who could give anything approaching to a true and illuminative exposition of Christianity; its spiritual force unfelt, the key to its history and motives is lost, and the record becomes a mere chronicle, to which

the guiding thread is wholly wanting, or is misleadingly supplied. *Mutatis mutandis* the same principle is valid for all intellectual and religious beliefs; the right standpoint of sympathy and perception is everything. And if this is true of the living faiths of the world, where it is possible to come into actual contact with their professors and followers, much more is it true of those that are dead and gone. Only slowly and with much study and pains can we work our way to their centre and core, and turning round survey the whole.

Religious Growth and Evolution

The analogy of language may, however, be allowed to suggest the further truth, that all religious systems, past or present, are the fruits of growth, are *evolved*, in the sense that they have their roots in the past, and progress therefrom, not by sudden unreasoning leaps or hiatus, but by steady persistent advance. The preparation for the advance may have been silently made, underground and unnoticed, and the upheaval may therefore appear cataclysmic; but it is not really so, and it is the function of the historian of religious thought to trace the stages. And further, as in the natural world growth takes place from the simple to the more complex forms of life, that is not first which is structurally elaborate and complicated, but that which is simply disposed and inartificial, and the general advance is towards extreme specialisation, so is ordered the development of the spiritual and religious thought and life of man. Evolution in the broad sense is everywhere from below upwards, from the simplest framework and conditions to the highly organised and individualised substance. And the movement in opposition, *degradation*, is the exception which serves to

emphasize the rule. Nothing is more striking to the student of early religious beliefs than their comparative monotony and uniformity. They are reducible to a few general principles and concepts, but seem to be barren of independence or initiative. All nature-religions, for example, are alike, and save for differences of name and place might almost be copied from one another. They call their gods by diverse names, Indra or Thor, Bel Zeus or Jupiter, Mitra or Ra, but these perform the same acts and discharge the same functions. So in their broad features the faiths of savage and semi-civilised peoples, with all their variety in detail, are consistent in principle to a few fundamental ideas, and move forward on a few well-marked lines of progress. The 'varieties of religious belief' are more diverse at the present time, cover a wider range, occupy vaster fields with more minute and divergent speculation, than at any previous epoch in the world's history; and the attempt to induce or compel identity of creed, or even uniformity of practice, is as futile and hopeless as to endeavour to turn back the ocean's tide.

Relation of the new to the old in Religion

The inference, therefore, lies ready to hand that there is no absolutely new religion, if the expression is intended to imply dissociation from the past, and complete independence of a predecessor or predecessors. Of every form of religious belief it will be true that it is only explicable in and through its antecedents, and apart from them, man and the universe being what they are, would not and could not have been. Its *differentia* from the old, the degree in which novel features of doctrine or practice are introduced, will depend in ordinary circumstances upon the

initiative and force of will of the individual, who in his more or less conscious and purposeful advance carries others with him. If his originality and propulsive power are great, he imposes his own thought and teaching upon the people, and becomes known as the founder of a new faith. Otherwise, and in proportion to the strength and vitality of the old beliefs, he is regarded by others and regards himself as a reformer, who prunes away that which is antiquated, misleading, or hurtful, and establishes the better. The difference between these two therefore, the founder and the reformer, proves to be to a large extent a question of degree, of personal force and character, and of the needs and circumstances of the age in which he finds himself. In a degenerate age of decaying and despairing spiritual life he may stimulate, revive, impart a new direction and tone to such an extent and so successfully that he bears the name of 'founder' of a faith which so greatly transcends the old. Otherwise he is 'reformer,' the value and permanence of whose work will be in proportion to the distress of the times, and the capacity and insight of which he is himself possessed. In outline this will have been the history of all religious progress and development ; although in only a few instances have the names of the founders or reformers been preserved. To determine the relationship of the various forms of religious belief, and to trace their historical connection, is one of the most interesting as it is one of the most important duties of the historian and student of Comparative Religion.

The various classifications other than genealogical that have been proposed offer little of interest. As, for example, the distribution of all religions into the two classes of natural and revealed ; a distinction

which corresponds to no real or inherent difference, and which therefore contributes little towards a true understanding of the character and growth of religious thought. All the higher and more organised systems of religion make for themselves the same claim to have their origin in a divine revelation, however communicated, and deny the rights or pretensions of all others. The order of precedence therefore, and application of the principle of classification will differ according as it is drawn up by a Brāhman, a Jew, a Christian, or a Muhammadan; and the divergence is too great to suppose that any mutual agreement or concession is probable. Such an arrangement, moreover, appears to beg the question when it proposes to substitute for a scientific determination of relationship and place, made after due research and dispassionate consideration of facts, an *a priori* assumption that this or that religion rests on a different basis, and originates in a different manner from others. To be able to classify religions as natural or revealed, some agreement must be arrived at as to the definition, the characteristics, the limits of revelation; these characteristics must be found present in some, and proved to be absent from other religions; and to our own and others' satisfaction, the task must be successfully accomplished of sorting out the varied beliefs of man into those due to his own unaided or intuitive efforts, and those communicated to him from without. The achievement of such a task presupposes a knowledge of what revelation is, and where and where only it is to be traced. There is little probability that any serious student of Comparative Religion will lay claim to such intimate knowledge. On the contrary, the

Religions Natural or Revealed

alpha and *omega* of any profitable inquiry into so large and difficult a subject is to dismiss all prepossessions, and to follow whither truth and the facts shall lead.

True or False

A similar objection lies against the ordinary qualification of religions as true or false, namely that it corresponds to no absolute, essential, and universally accepted distinction. Not that such a division is impossible or incorrect,—it must, on the contrary, hold good in the eyes of all save the small minority who regard all religions as equally true and equally false. But that it is of necessity purely subjective, and therefore inadmissible from a strictly scientific point of view. In every religion there is present the human element, which is liable to error, and fruitful of false conclusions and practices. Absolute perfect unmingled truth is not found anywhere even in Christian beliefs and observances. On the other hand, in all the chief religions at least of the world there resides some truth, obscured and overborne perhaps by prevalent error,—a substratum of fine gold scarcely discernible beneath the baser superstructure,—which testifies to an upward reaching forth after purity and holiness. Least of all can he who holds the Christian faith venture to assert that in the hearts of any, even the most degraded peoples, God has left Himself without a witness ; that their creed and practice is utterly bad, root and branch, with no glimmer of truth shining out of the dark shadows. The greater part of doctrine and faith may be false, even hopelessly, irretrievably false ; but there will be a remainder that is true, although the truth may not be looked at in the customary light, or set forth in the wonted formulae. In most instances each man

claims on behalf of his own religion that it is trustworthy and assured, and ignores or depreciates all others. On so variable and subjective a basis no historical and scientific classification can be possible.

Religions again have been described as destitute of, or possessing a sacred book, to which is attributed a divine origin and character. Judaism, Christianity, Muhammadanism, and others will stand on one side; the Greek and Roman faiths, the ancient Celtic religion, with many besides, will occupy a second place. The division at its best is little more than mechanical, and can hardly be said to serve any useful purpose. Neither is it entirely reliable. The apparent absence of a sacred book or books may in some cases be due merely to our own ignorance. A fuller acquaintance with the life, intellectual and spiritual, of the people in question would bring to light writings which in their regard were wholly unique and worthy of reverence. Considering then how little we know comparatively of the literature or beliefs of many ancient and modern races, it is somewhat perilous to found much argument upon a seeming defect, which after all may not be real. Under any circumstances little is thus gained of real insight into the nature and affinities of a given creed or practice.

Sacred Books

Other principles or methods of classification that have been suggested may be very briefly recorded. The first of these is associated with so influential a name as that of the late Professor Whitney, who in his *Science of Religion* endeavours to draw a distinction between those faiths which have grown up as a result of the collective efforts, as it were, and wisdom of a nation, and those which owe their existence to the genius and labours of an

Other Modes of Classification

individual founder. The distinction is real, and in general one that is easily made, but it does not possess much practical value. While in some instances the debt of the nominal founder and originator to his nameless predecessors may be so great that it would be more just to give to him the name of reformer.[1] Religions again may be divided into natural and ethical, according to the principle, mere nature worship on the one hand or morals on the other, which carries most weight in their teaching and ritual. Here the difference is substantial, and of much importance. But the carrying out of such a classification presents grave, almost insuperable difficulties. Undoubtedly some religions are predominantly naturalistic, and others predominantly ethical. The majority, however, will belong to a third class, in which the natural and ethical elements are alike present, and are often so nicely balanced that it is not easy to decide on which side of the line such faiths should be placed. Nor when a position has been assigned to them has much advance been thereby made towards a true comprehension of their origin, their relationships, and their claims.

Classification by Natural Relationship

It remains that the most promising and helpful system of arrangement is that which looks upon religions from, as it were, an external point of view, and endeavours to classify them, and to determine their affinity, according to the peoples or nationalities by whom they have been accepted. In other words, a grouping on the basis of race and historical connection and descent is likely to afford much more real assistance in comprehending the nature and

[1] *supra*, p. 38.

mutual relations of the different religions than any artificial distribution by features selected more or less at random. Thus, to take the two great groups, the Indo-European and the Semitic, there may readily be drawn certain broad lines which mark the religious characteristics of each. Fifty or more years ago Ernest Renan attributed to the Semite a 'monotheistic instinct'; meaning thereby nothing more than that in him there existed a tendency to develop belief in the direction of monotheism,—a tendency which, of course, in many of the Semitic peoples never found opportunity to display itself.[1] As compared with the Indo-European, theirs is a cold stern nature, simpler and perhaps on the whole more practical, but restricted in its outlook, and generally confining its energies to some few chosen modes of life and action. The conception of the Divine Being is more ethical and ideal, further removed from mere anthropomorphism, a superhuman royal lord rather than a deified hero or ancestor. On the lower, less intellectual side, the Semite shows a predisposition to the worship of trees and stones, multiplies altars and offerings, and broadly speaking looks upon nature in her harsh

[1] 'In my opinion, he (Renan) has rightly attributed to the Semites a peculiar genius for religion; rightly maintained their inferiority to the Aryans as regards both imagination and speculation; and rightly indicated how their inferiority in these respects favoured their attainment of a simpler, more elevated, and more ethical idea of the Divine.'—R. Flint, *Philosophy of History*, Edinburgh, 1893, p. 624. Cp. Riehm, quoted in Davidson, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 249:—'If in antiquity the religious feeling and the consciousness of dependence upon the deity was particularly lively and powerful, so that the whole national life was governed by it, it was among the Shemitic nations, even in antiquity, that the religious spirit unfolded its highest energy.' See also Davidson himself, *l.c.*, to the same effect.

and cruel aspect. The Indo-European or Aryan, on the other hand, is more imaginative and genial, in religious as in other matters gives free play to fancy, and if he can be said to reveal a tendency at all, it is towards polytheism and pantheism. His god is much nearer to him in speech and act, more anthropomorphic than is the god of the Semite, more readily degenerates into a simple cunning sprite or malicious demon. The 'genius for religion' with which the Semite is credited,—although the phrase must not be pressed too far,—has no counterpart in the mind or character of the Indo-European. To the former his religious duties are a serious, perhaps the most serious part of his daily occupations and life. On the latter religious obligations sit comparatively lightly; they are a pleasing diversion, but no more engrossing or important than the thousand other diversions and cares which fill up his round of existence.

Twofold Tendency of Theistic Belief

These national or racial tendencies, as they have developed and exhibited themselves in regard to the Divine Being, have been characterised respectively as *theocratic* and *theanthropic*. The theocratic spirit lays emphasis on the divine sovereignty and supremacy. He does what He will with His own. And the worshipper is a servant (Heb. עבד), who may not discuss or dispute His will, but only do it. To a thoughtful mind possessed of such a spirit any visible representation of the Deity in human or other form is inconceivable. The idea would be abhorrent, and could hardly present itself seriously. The distance between man and God, as realised from the human side, tends to become greater rather than to contract; and the awe of man for his Sovereign and Lord to lead to deeper self-abasement and humility. There is little or nothing in common between the divine and human natures, and man can only stand afar off, and fear while he obeys. The entire conception is that of an autocratic Lord, issuing supreme commands, which must and indeed will be executed, whatever

man may think or prefer; his part is only to submit, and to conform himself to immutable laws and the dictates of a sovereign and irresponsible will.

As has often been indicated, the names in use among the Jews for the Divine Being reflect this tendency and attitude of mind. God is the Almighty, and the King, omnipotent and transcendent,—אל, שדי, מלך, יהוה. And there is evident in the course of their history a hardening and strengthening of this feeling, so that the comparative nearness and familiarity of some of the early narratives become impossible in later times. Naturally no hard and fast line can be drawn. The human mind is far too complex to be dominated solely by one thought. There are many indications in the Old Testament itself of the workings of another spirit, an endeavour to reach a more humane and intimate conception of the divine nature, which found expression in individual lives and amid a generally unfriendly environment. The protest, however, against the extreme autocratic view became weaker in course of time. And the Jewish nation as a whole takes its place with other Semitic peoples in its regard for God and its thought concerning Him.

With the Greeks, the ancient Indians, and the Indo-European races generally it was otherwise. Their conception of God was *anthropomorphic*. To their thought the Deity was as a man, a *superman*, magnified and often distorted, but yet essentially human, of like passions with themselves. To them accordingly the deification of man and the incarnation of God were alike natural and possible. To the mind of the Semite neither idea was conceivable, nor can his doctrine or creed make room for such an interchange or communion of natures; the degradation of the Deity implied would be intolerable. Perhaps the most characteristic conception in this respect is that of the *Fatherhood* of God, which emphasizes the tenderness and closeness of the relationship,—men are His sons, His children; while it also presupposes belief in the essential oneness of their nature. And again the well-known names for the Deity give expression to the prevailing thought of the worshipper, and imply a familiarity and confidence in approaching Him which is altogether alien to the Semitic mind,—Ζεὺς πατήρ, Jupiter, deus, deva, Wodan, the Allfather; sons also are the gracious gift of God,—Devadatta, Theodorus, etc.

It need hardly be added that the two conceptions are most closely and completely united in the teaching of Christianity.

> No great religion indeed that lays hold upon the heart and conscience of mankind can entirely repudiate either the one or the other. All that is claimed by the distinction, and that history appears to teach, is that this or that conception will predominate in the thought and creed of a people, and will be more or less exclusive according to the purity of the strain of their descent. The uncompromising creed of the Arab is thus the best and most characteristic representative of Semitic religious thought. Intercourse and commingling of race will usually have as one of its consequences in the sphere of religion a blending of the two conceptions of the relation between God and man, neither of which in itself is complete or self-sufficing ; and the result will usually be of the happiest augury for the progress and enlightenment of the race.

The various groups of peoples, Dravidian Mongolian and others, which, for want of a better term, it was customary at one time to describe as Turanian, appear to occupy an independent position, and to present diversities of character and religious conceptions entirely parallel to their unlikeness in nature and national features. On the whole, however, they may be said to stand at a lower stage of development, and to have proved themselves inferior, if not in their religious capabilities, yet in their religious attainments. They have grasped and formulated no distinctive aspect of the divine relationship or nature, which has been a real contribution to man's understanding of God. In this respect, therefore, their importance in the history of religious thought is hardly equal to that of the other two great families of nations.

It must be repeated, however, that indications and distinctions such as these can never be more than general, and must not be pressed in every particular instance. There will be exceptions on all sides. The characteristics of one group will shade off into those of the next, and on the borderline between them there will be much interchange

of opinion and of thought. Individual nations, like individual men, will be better or worse than their fellows; and as human nature is of infinite variety, so infinite will be the diverse forms of religious beliefs held by peoples and races who may otherwise and in other respects be close allies. The broad features may be safely sketched. No precise filling in of details is admissible or indeed possible.

With Semitic religions must be classed that of ancient Egypt. It is probable that the Semitic element in the people themselves represents an earlier offshoot from the parent stem than the Arabs, the Aramaeans, or even the Babylonians and Assyrians; and that, secluded in the narrow valley of the Nile, the nation has developed independently and on somewhat different lines, both from a linguistic and a religious point of view. Their religious beliefs again have influenced the other races of Northern Africa, but to what extent it is impossible at this distance of time to determine. Probably the influence was both wide and deep. We are, however, almost wholly unable to trace its course, or to assign its limits.

Following Professor Tiele, than whom no higher authority is recognised on a subject which he has made his own, it is usual to divide the Indo-European religions into five groups, of which the first has been historically by far the most important, even as it comprises the richest diversity of intellectual belief. (1) The Indo-Persian, or East Aryan, which would include as its chief members the creed variously termed Zoroastrianism Mazdaism Magism or even Parsïism, Brāhmanism and later Hinduism, with Buddhism; (2) Windic, the religions of the Wends and Slavs; (3) German; (4) Celtic; and (5) Pelasgic or Graeco-Roman.

The last is to be regarded as other than of pure Indo-European origin, being largely mingled with and influenced by Semitic ideas.

The leading Semitic faiths, past and present, besides the Egyptian, are the Babylonian and Assyrian religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism. Of these Christianity and Muhammadanism certainly, and in all probability the others also, have received elements, both of doctrine and practice, from non-Semitic sources.

Outside and independent of these great divisions lie three sub-groups, of unequal importance. The first is the Mongolian, including the native religions of Tibet, China, and Japan, and in Europe of the Finns and Lapps. Second, the African ; by which term are to be understood the beliefs and customs of the original inhabitants, as distinguished from importations from without. Of the African group, four sub-classes are usually defined,—the Cushite, of the north ; the Negro, or Nigritian, of the centre and West Coast ; the Bantu, largely intermingled with the last, but occupying a broad belt across the central and south-central part of the continent, from east to west ; and the Hottentot, or Bushman, in the south. The general characteristic of the Negroes and Bantus is a belief in spirits, together with fetich worship and the practice of sorcery or witchcraft ; they recognise, however, for the most part, a great supreme Spirit, to whom all others are in more or less complete subjection. The Hottentots also, apparently, acknowledge the existence of a universal and paramount Spirit, but have no beliefs or customs of the nature of fetichism. Third and last would come the American group, including Indian forms of religion, which as we have seen are largely totemistic, and Eskimo.

There remains the very difficult and yet most interesting question as to the ultimate nature of religion itself. Strip it of its accidents, the varying qualities and circumstances of time and place, of nationality environment and growth, and what is left? Religion may not unreasonably be regarded as a different thing from this or that religion, historical faith or creed. The latter is subject to variety, evolution, and decay. If it is possible to select and define the permanent element in religion, that which presents itself the same under all the shifting circumstances and experiences of human life, the explanation will have been found of its most diverse and complex forms of expression, as well as of the simplest manifestations of religious consciousness in the habits and beliefs of primitive life. It is no less evident that a search for the essential principle of religion, since it has to do with the human mind and thought, must be conducted at least as fully in the sphere and under the guidance of an exact psychology, as in the light of Comparative Religion. The subject has been discussed at length in many works of the greatest value; and here only a brief reference can be given, and an indication of the results that have been reached.

Fundamental Character of Religion

Two conceptions have already been found to be so generally present in the religious consciousness of man as to be not unfairly regarded as universal, a conviction of the existence of a power or powers beyond and outside of himself, and the belief in the non-mortality of the soul, that is, in its survival after death.[1] To these

Two general Preconceptions

[1] *supra*, p. 22 ff.

might be added, what indeed is implied in the latter belief, and forms the basis of religious action and responsibility, the assurance of personal identity through all the periods and changing circumstances of life. Normally these convictions are everywhere present, even if in vague uncertain form. The exceptions of actual disbelief are rare, and are not primitive, but induced and artificial. And the issue, therefore, is reduced to this, whether it is possible to go behind these two, and to formulate from them a single solitary principle, which may then be regarded as the germ, the essence of all religion, whose presence constitutes the beginning of religious life, and without which no such life even in its most inchoate and rudimentary form is conceivable, or can exist. The answers that have been suggested are very various, and reveal great differences of apprehension and judgement.

Definitions of Religion

Many definitions that have been offered may be set aside at once; they seize upon an accident or detail, but fail to enunciate an essential principle. As for example that religion is doctrine, a system or series of beliefs more or less elaborate and defined; or that it is observance, the practice in the life of the conviction and wish of the heart. These, and others of a similar character, mistake a part of man's nature for the whole, and however true and constant may be the expression of the religious mind which they assert, it is only one mode or aspect of the religious life, and falls far short of a real comprehensiveness. Nor is it possible to define religion solely or adequately in terms of worship, a procedure which would indeed satisfy the first conception above referred to, but takes no account of the second. Others again have set

forth faith itself, belief, as the essential principle of all religion; and faith is manifestly present in any and every expression of the religious life, the presupposition and condition of every religious thought. It forms no less, however, an indispensable element in the simplest ethics, and the barest and bluntest materialism cannot dispense with it. Faith, therefore, in the broadest sense of the term, is not peculiar to religion, and cannot be claimed as its *differentia*, or the determining principle that marks it off from all else, and constitutes its essence.

In order to avoid this difficulty therefore, and to narrow down a conception that proves to be too broad and comprehensive for the purpose, to the definition of faith, belief, as the fundamental basis of religion, some authorities add a limiting or qualifying clause, faith in a moral order, in the final rectitude of the universe, that all things are designed well, and will issue well; the essence of religion is that the universe of which man is a part has a meaning, and that that meaning is good. This, however, would seem far too advanced and abstruse a thought to be the postulate of the earliest glimmerings of the religious sense. It is rather the fruit of much experience and reflection than the foundation of it; and is far from being an obvious deduction from man's first contact with the elements and forces by which he finds himself surrounded. Moreover religion is not synonymous or coterminous with ethics, however closely related the two may be. Or if the faith which religion requires as its basis be explained to be a faith which recognises the supernatural, and regards it as so closely encompassing and enfolding the natural that the two are virtually one, a similar objection will be

valid as against the definition. The idea involved is altogether too complex to be conceived as the root or germ in the primitive mind whence the manifold diversities of religious thought have been derived.

And if with Professor Tiele[1] the attempt be made to go behind these convictions or conceptions, and to find the ultimate basis or beginnings of religion in the mental disposition, the attitude of mind, which renders them possible, and from which they result, it does not seem that much has been gained. Undoubtedly a certain quality or capability of mind must precede, logically if not actually and in experience, its expression in the act of faith; thereby alone is the latter as it were brought into being and rendered effective. But this is only to say that the mind is the mind, equipped as we know it to be, and with the capacities that long experience has found to be invariably present there. Unless therefore 'mind' be understood as equivalent to the whole man, the definition will run the risk of being found to be too narrow. Religion is not a function of the mental activities alone at any time, least of all perhaps in its beginnings. To define it in terms of mind alone is to ignore some of its most important characteristics, and to cut it off from some of its most important spheres of action.

Predisposition

Against almost every definition that has been proposed it is not difficult to accumulate objections. Most of these perhaps are in error in attempting to include too much. It may be expected that so elemental a quality in the constitution of man as the religious will find

Worship

[1] *Science of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 196 ff.

its truest and most exact characterisation in few and the simplest terms. On the whole, then, it would seem that the essential quality or nature of religion is best described as consisting in *worship*, if the word be understood in its broadest sense of a reverential feeling towards an external power or powers and a sense of obligation or duty arising therefrom. Nevertheless it seems probable that even this lays too great emphasis upon the human aspect, interprets the religious sense too much in terms of a merely human faculty or ability, and in ignoring entirely what has been called the infinite in man becomes one-sided and incomplete. A contribution is made to religion always from both sides, the human and the divine, and they are joined in inseparable mutual relationship. It may well be that account should be taken of both, even at the very origin and initiation, where religion begins to be.

Importance of the Greater Religious Systems

Any consideration, however, of the nature of religion which was satisfied with investigating its origin, and the source from which it took its rise, would be so imperfect as to be for practical purposes almost worthless. The great religions of the world are the finest fruits of the religious sense of man, expanded developed and brought to fruition. Their number is comparatively limited. But they are all of transcendent importance for the history of mankind. The number of lesser and less widespread faiths is very great, and of these it will not be possible to pass in review here more than a few out of many. The attempt must be made to select those which are most fully representative of the rest, and to submit these to as

close a scrutiny and comparison as the case will admit; endeavouring to draw from the whole general conclusions which will throw light upon the development and character of the religious thought of mankind, and be of service not only to the student of Comparative Religion, but also of other sciences which find their interest in the life and mind of man. In the history of the human race the first position in importance and influence has been taken by faiths of Semitic origin, and these will occupy by far the largest place in any broad survey or scientific history.

LITERATURE.—References to the most important books will be found in the above pages. Other accessible and convenient works are C. P. Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion*, London, 1892, and *Gifford Lectures*, 2 vols.; F. Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, new edition, London, 1893; W. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, new edition, London, 1894; P. D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*[3], 2 vols., Tübingen, 1905; W. Wundt, *Völkerpsychologie*, 2 vols. in four parts, Leipzig, first to third editions, 1904–1911; W. McDougall, *Body and Mind*, London, 1911, a full and capable defence of animism; A. E. Crawley, *Idea of the Soul*, London, 1909; L. R. Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, London, 1905; G. M. Grant, *Religions of the World*, new edition, 1895, and often reprinted; E. Clodd, *Animism*, in the series 'Religions, Ancient and Modern,' London, 1905; and articles in *ERE* and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

CHAPTER II

EGYPT

THERE is an advantage in more ways and more aspects than one in selecting the history and religion of Egypt as the initial point of a comparative survey of ancient faiths. The antiquity and continuity of Egyptian national life, bridging not only the centuries but the millenniums, to a birth that lies so far back beyond the beginnings of our cognisance that it is hardly possible even to conjecture its date, presents a claim that would with difficulty be resisted to a position in the very forefront of all historical study that endeavours to trace and co-ordinate the lines of religious development. And the unique position of the land itself, occupying the border territory of East and West, and extending a hand to each, over which from south to north and from west to east the peoples tramped to and fro, never leaving her thought and life unaffected,—the teacher and the taught, both of the Indo-European, the Semite, and the more obscure Hamitic races,—gave to Egypt a supreme opportunity, and has had no small share in securing for her undying interest. The vigour and persistence of Egyptian national life finds its only, yet unequal parallel in the Far East, in the ancient people and kingdom of China. China, however, was isolated and remote, and almost of

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necessity cherished her own wisdom and civilisation in proud aloofness from the rest of the world. Egypt could not, if it would, stand apart for any long period; and in the succession of strangers and conquerors who laid a more or less violent hand upon her fair and rich territory, she received a constant stream of new thought, new habits and modes of life, which only the unrivalled tenacity of her own sons enabled her partly to resist and partly to assimilate without forfeiting her own individuality, or losing the traits of her national and religious character and life.

It will not seem strange, therefore, if in the moral and religious sphere also there is found a rich variety of thought and belief, derived to all appearance from the most diverse sources and tendencies. If in so vast and complicated a history, the beginnings of which are almost wholly dark to us, and in the course of which there are periods not only of years but of centuries that are hardly illuminated by a single ray of light or trustworthy tradition, there should be interwoven varied and apparently independent strands, the source of which can only be conjectured, which have led to results of a complexity beyond the power of modern research to unravel. Egypt as she stood geographically between the two continents, in name a part of Africa, but with more intimate relations at least in ancient times with Asia,—a meeting-place of the nations,—so appears to have gathered into herself elements from various religions or strata of religious belief, which, acting and reacting on one another, have become welded together into a whole, the parts of which are no longer to be certainly distinguished or traced back to their respective origins. And as in the tangled skein of its political history the

student's first feeling is that of bewilderment in the presence of perplexed lists of dynasties and kings, so on the religious side the difficulty of reducing to order the apparent chaos of conflicting beliefs seems to be insuperable. Recent study and research have been all in the direction of emphasizing the variety of religious conceptions, and of discovering new phases of religious thought. The simplicity and unity which were formerly believed to have characterised Egyptian faith through all the vicissitudes of national history have disappeared in the light of a more exact study and a more sympathetic and comprehensive insight.

Knowledge still Deficient

It is, moreover, still true, and must not be overlooked in all discussions of Egypt and of things Egyptian, that our knowledge is even now very far from complete. The decipherment of the inscriptions opened up a new world of history, of art, and of religion; and to the spade of the excavator scholars are indebted for a more or less intimate and exact acquaintance with phases and periods of Egyptian life which not many years ago appeared to be hopelessly lost to knowledge. The tendency of all investigation and research has been to push back the origin of Egyptian civilisation to an earlier and yet earlier age. There remain, however, many periods of which little or nothing is certainly known; and inferences drawn from sculpture or from imperfectly understood texts with regard to the real inner feeling and life of the people must often be precarious. It is in the sphere of religion that the doubt as to the adequacy of modern interpretation and insight will most frequently intrude. And although it may be true that of ancient Egyptian thought and experience

more perhaps is known than of any other nation of antiquity, even here the materials for a complete and consecutive history are not yet available, and probably never will be. The broad outline may be safely and confidently drawn; much of the detail, the filling in, can only be regarded as tentative. and subject to a revision, which may never at any time become possible.

Influence of Environment

The unique position also and the natural features of the country cannot fail to have largely moulded the religious conceptions and observances of the primitive inhabitants. Whereas in most other lands the apparent changefulness of nature, its variety and uncertainty, its storms and calms, its smiles and frowns, would create the deepest impression, in Egypt consideration would rather be claimed by nature's uniformity and regular modes of procedure. The perennial sunshine, the yearly rise and fall of the Nile, the one and only river, the unbroken routine of the seasons, would arrest attention; the *sameness* of all phenomena rather than their variety would be the lesson taught by the external world. It is scarcely fanciful to say that the very form of the country would suggest expansion in one direction only, rather than all-round development. A land that almost answers to the definition of length without breadth; a narrow green valley, closely hemmed in on either side by grey sterile desert, dependent entirely upon its river, with no scenery and no life apart from the Nile; with permanence, regularity impressed upon every aspect of surrounding nature,—a manifold animistic worship, a religion grounded upon natural phenomena, developing in an environment such as this, could hardly fail to identify itself

with ideas of stability and routine, rather than with those which suggested convulsion and change. The divinities of men living under such conditions, if they at all recognise and worship gods of the seasons and the sky, will be marked by sameness rather than variety, with characters remarkable rather for consistency and likeness than for a rich diversity and contrast. The form and climate of the country, its monotony and dependence upon the one never-failing stream, would be reflected first in the minds and habits of the people dwelling there, and then in their conceptions, their mental pictures of external things,[1] and especially of the supernatural beings whom they believed to animate or preside over the outside world.

The Name

The ancient Semitic name for Egypt, *Miṣraim*, has never received an altogether satisfactory explanation.[2] The view formerly accepted that the termination was that of the dual, and the word therefore signified the two Māṣors, i.e. Lower and Upper Egypt, has been widely and probably rightly surrendered. Other scholars regard the ending as locative. The native Egyptian name for the country is Kimet, Copt. KHME, XHMI, which apparently denotes the 'black' soil or land, contrasted with the 'red' sand of the desert; and so also Plutarch writes and explains the name Χημίαν as given on account of the colour of the

[1] For an interesting description of a similar river-valley, and its effects upon its inhabitants, see Hudson's *Idle Days in Patagonia*, chh. iii., iv.

[2] Cp. *Oxf. Heb. Lex.*, *s.v.*, and references; S. R. Driver, *Genesis*[4], p. 117 f. and note; J. Skinner, *Genesis*, *ICC*, 1910, p. 201; G. A. Smith, in *RThPh*, 1907, p. 12, and *Jerusalem*, 1907, vol. ii. p. 155 ff.; W. E. Crum, in *HBD*, i. p. 653.

land.[1] The Greek Αἴγυπτος is a corruption of the Coptic.

Lower Egypt is geologically of recent formation, and in early historical and prehistoric ages must have been much more contracted than at present. In prehistoric times also it is probable that the valley of the Nile was comparatively well wooded. The continual retreat or destruction of the trees must have affected the climate, and with the climate the character of the population of the country. Groves or forests are now unknown, and few trees remain except the palm.[2]

The Land

From the earliest times the Egyptian territory, both Upper and Lower, was apportioned out into districts known as *hesep*, or by the Greek title of νόμοι (Nomes), which remained practically unchanged through all the vicissitudes of Egyptian history as long as the land was under native rule. These divisions numbered about forty, and have been supposed to have been based originally on tribal distinctions, and religiously to have been characterised by totemistic modes of thought and worship. The latter view is contested by many scholars, and the evidence for it is wholly inferential and indirect. Each Nome had its capital city,

[1] *De Is. et Osir.*, xxxiii: ἔτι τὴν Αἴγυπτον ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα μελάγγειον οὖσαν, ὥσπερ τὸ μέλαν τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ, Χημίαν καλοῦσιν.

[2] The most complete and reliable account of the geology and geography of Egypt is to be found in the reports of the Geological Survey, established in 1896. A brief and competent summary is Sir J. W. Dawson's *Egypt and Syria*[2], London, 1887, chh. i.–iii. All the Histories of Egypt contain more or less detailed references to the subject; and in the case of Egypt its importance and interest are perhaps greater, from an anthropological as well as a psychological and religious point of view, than in that of most other countries.

in which were centred the administration and public worship of the district, the care of its agricultural and waste lands, and of the system of irrigation, which drew the necessary supply of water from the Nile by means of canals.

History

The detailed history of Egypt through the centuries is of the greatest interest, and presents problems of the utmost difficulty and complexity. A mere reference to sources of information is all that is here necessary or practicable. The earliest native account is that of Manetho, an Egyptian priest who lived about the middle of the third century B.C., and composed a chronicle of his country's history from the commencement of royal dominion to his own day.[1] He enumerates and describes thirty-one 'Dynasties,' of which the first six are known as the Old Kingdom, *circa* 4400–3100 B.C.; the eleventh and twelfth Dynasties, *circa* 2200–1800 B.C., form the Middle Kingdom, succeeded by the foreign domination of the 'Hyksos,' or Shepherd Kings, for a further period of two centuries; the New Kingdom includes the eighteenth and two following Dynasties, *circa* 1500–1000 B.C. With the twenty-second Dynasty the series of native rulers came to an end, and with brief intervals the country has ever since been more or less completely under foreign rule. Persian supremacy lasted for two centuries, 525–332 B.C., and was followed by the conquest of Alexander the Great in the latter year, under whom and his successors the Ptolemies, —the Greek period,—Egypt remained until it

[1] Manetho's work has perished, but extracts from it have been preserved by later Greek writers, as Josephus, Eusebius, and Africanus; it is from these that our knowledge of the original is derived.

became a Roman province in the year 30 B.C. The Muhammadan conquest by 'Amr, and the taking of Alexandria 641 A.D., put an end to Roman or Byzantine control, and established the rule of the Muslim, which has been maintained to our own day. Lists of the early kings are also given in inscriptions on the temple walls at Abydos, Karnak, and elsewhere, and in the so-called 'Turin Papyrus.' And the chronology is further elucidated by regnal and other dates which are found in the inscriptions in the temples and tombs. All the lists begin with Menes or Mena. Religiously, the most significant and perhaps most interesting period is that of the 'heretic' king Amenophis IV, or Akhenaten (Ikhnaten, Khuenaten).[1]

As recently as the year 1894 Professor W. M. Flinders Petrie could write:—'The first three dynasties are a blank as far as monuments are concerned; they are as purely on a literary basis as the kings of Rome or the primeval kings of Ireland' (*Hist. of Egypt*, vol. i., first edition, 1894, p. 16). To Professor Petrie himself is due in the first instance the credit for the patient excavation and the co-ordinating of facts and discoveries which have now made known much of the life and environment of these early kings. The names also at least of some pre-dynastic rulers have been disclosed.[2] The subject has been much

[1] *infra*, p. 119 ff.

[2] See *Royal Tombs of the First Dynasty*, pts. i. and ii., by W. M. F. Petrie, London, 1899 and 1901. Of the numerous histories of Egypt the most accessible and useful are those by Flinders Petrie himself, with the co-operation of other scholars, *History of Egypt*, 6 vols., London, vol. i.[5], 1903; H. Brugsch, *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, 2nd English edition, London, 2 vols., 1881; J. H. Breasted, *History of Egypt*, London, 1906. Translations of the

discussed, and Prof. Petrie's results are by no means universally accepted, or his tentative arrangement and datings of the early monarchs approved.

It is from the tombs also, from the burial customs, and from the funerary furniture and pictorial representations discovered therein, that our knowledge of the pre-historic and pre-dynastic population of Egypt is derived. These primitive peoples were known generally to the Egyptians as the *Anu*, and they were not without a degree of civilisation, in that they possessed domesticated animals, were acquainted with the ostrich and antelope, which they hunted with spears and bows, and practised the arts of fishing and sailing on the great river. In their physical constitution there was present a negroid element, but it was not predominant, and the prevailing strain in a population that was manifestly not pure and unmixed was apparently of the African type known as Hamitic. Others claim to be able to distinguish a threefold ethnological contribution among these prehistoric inhabitants of the Nile valley, an aboriginal element more or less closely allied to the negro, a dark Nubian type from the south, and a light-coloured Libyan type from the west and south-west. Concerning the origin or primitive habitat, however, of these little is or can be known ; and it is probable that the neighbouring shores of the Mediterranean sent a contribution of invaders and colonists in very early times to a land whose position invited attack, and whose attractions urged to settlement. In this heterogeneous population, moreover, it

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original inscriptions, carefully verified and revised, are given by the last-named author in *Ancient Records of Egypt : the Historical Documents*, Chicago, 1905.

seems possible to trace about the beginning of the dynastic period a comparatively well-marked distinction between the peoples of the north and of the south, of Lower and Upper Egypt respectively. The former show signs of an intermixture of a foreign race, apparently Asiatic or Syrian; the latter are predominantly of the North African type, Libyan or Berber. And the meeting or fusion of the two played a not inconsiderable part in the evolution of the strangely composite race, whose fortunes and civilisation came at the dawn of history under the guidance and control of a more highly gifted race from over the sea.[1]

Early Semitic Settlement

That in origin these early settlers in Egypt, with whom its history may be said definitely to begin, were of Semitic stock hardly admits of doubt, and is indeed generally accepted. They brought with them ideas derived from, or adopted in the land from which they came. Their greatest gifts, however, to the people and country where they found a new home were the loftier religious conceptions which they imposed upon the primitive beliefs and practices of the existing population, and which ultimately blended more or less completely with them into a much diversified whole; and a knowledge of the art of writing and of the use of the hieroglyphic

[1] The evidence for the pre-dynastic races of Egypt is to be found especially in the yearly reports and monographs of the *Egypt Exploration Fund*, and is discussed and summed up in the Histories and other publications that deal with Egypt. See for example Breasted, ch. iii. *Earliest Egypt*; E. Naville, *Beginnings of Egyptian Civilisation*, an important paper read at the meeting of the British Association at Leicester, 1907; art. *Egypt* in *HDB*, vol. i.; Elliot Smith, in *EEF. Report*, 1908-09, p. 41.

signs, in which history and literature found expression. Some of the hieroglyphs in use from the earliest times are certainly of native origin; and although others, and perhaps the majority, are foreign, and ultimately traceable as many believe to Mesopotamia, yet the development of the written language in Egypt pursued an entirely independent course, and bears the strong impress of the religious and national life of the people, which it both promoted and served.

This immigration into the valley of the Nile might conceivably have followed any one of three different routes; and although there is a fairly general consensus of opinion with regard to the route actually taken, no certain conclusion appears possible, and no historical record or even tradition exists which would give weight to a decision in favour of one or other of the alternatives open. It is possible that the first immigrants came by sea to the Delta, and thence made their way up the river. The earliest primitive settlements, however, appear to have been on the banks of the river in the neighbourhood of Thebes, and not in Lower Egypt, as would naturally have been the case had the newcomers first reached that part of the country. Others have believed that an entrance may have been effected by land from the south, from Nubia, the upper Sudān, and Central Africa. To this theory a similar objection is raised that we should then expect to hear first of the invaders higher up the river, and further south than Thebes. Whether future discoveries will throw any further light upon this question, it is impossible to say. The most probable view, however, regards the colonisation of the country as taking place by way of the Red Sea, either from Arabia, or, as others believe with

perhaps less probability, from the east coast of Africa and Somaliland.[1] In either case landing was effected at some well-known port such as Kosseir ; the short breadth of desert that separated the invaders from the Nile valley was easily crossed, and the earliest colonies were established near to where Thebes afterwards stood. This accords with all that is known of the relations of the Egyptian people, of their early movements and traditions, and may provisionally at least be accepted.[2]

The colonists then who thus entered and occupied the land brought with them Semitic habits and modes of thought, and at least the germs of Semitic language and religion. They found a sparse, but not wholly uncivilised people in possession ; wandering tribes, perhaps somewhat akin to the nomads of Central Asia, from whom their successors or conquerors, mingling with and more or less completely enslaving them, adopted manners and practices, traditions also and modes of worship, which later became inextricably interwoven with their own, and resulted in a variety and complexity of religious faith hardly exceeded amongst any other people.[3]

[1] A modern instance of an Arabian tribe crossing the Red Sea and settling in Abyssinia is quoted in *ERE*, vol. i. p. 55. And it is pointed out that Semitic immigration into Africa from the east has never really ceased, but has occurred intermittently during the whole course of history.

[2] See further J. Capart, *Actes du prem. Congr. Intern. des Rel.*, ii. 1 p. 20; King and Hall, *Egypt and Western Asia*, p. 29 ff.; Breasted, *History of Egypt*, p. 25 f.

[3] This is confirmed by the fact that on the earliest Egyptian monuments at least three entirely different types of face and feature are represented. A fact which seems again to point to the occupation of the land by three or more distinct races, living together, who for a time preserved apart their individua characteristics and manner of life.

Nor is there any reason to suppose that the first wave of Semitic invasion and settlement was unique and never repeated. The probability is, on the contrary, that it was succeeded by many others, of varying magnitude and permanence, long before history or even tradition throw any direct light on the condition of the country.

Early Forms of Cult

In the earlier and more primitive form of faith thus established three important elements or types may be distinguished, each of which made its contribution to the resultant whole, and left a mark upon Egyptian religion, which endured throughout the entire course of its evolution. The first and perhaps historically most influential was nature worship, manifesting itself in the form of local cults, which, originally family or tribal, found a habitation and a home in the villages or cities that grew up as the habits of a roving or migrating life were exchanged for the permanence of occupied settlements. Each settlement or group of homes representing a clan or tribe became the centre of a distinct local worship, where reverence was paid to one or more especial divinities, whose sanctity and claims did not extend and were not at the first recognised beyond the bounds of the city or tribal territory. In many but not in all instances these local gods appear to have had totemistic associations, and so far to rest upon a basis of more primitive totemistic conceptions; examples may be the worship of the bull at Thebes and Memphis, of the goat at Mendes in the Delta, the crocodile in the Fayyūm, the cat at Bubastis, and others. Thus originated the *nomes* or counties into which Egypt, both Upper and Lower, was divided, whose boundaries fluctuated within narrow limits, but which on

the whole remained stable, as long as Egypt was a self-governing and independent land. They represented primitive tribal divisions, which had maintained themselves through historic times, when all recollection of their origin had passed away.

The second element of religious faith and practice was totemism, at least as widespread and influential as the local cults, which in the judgement of many scholars did in fact precede the latter, and formed the basis upon which they built up their ritual, and conceived the attributes of their gods. Direct evidence for aboriginal beliefs of a totemistic character, universally or almost universally prevalent in Egypt, and giving tone and colour to its religious creed as the various local cults developed and were harmonized, is under the conditions hardly to be expected. But the indirect proof from the facts of later history and development seems entirely conclusive. Each separate tribe or sub-tribe had as the object of its regard some animal or other inhabitant of the land or river. There is no trace of a totemistic cult based upon inanimate objects.[1] Upon this foundation of totem worship, which itself by that period had in all probability attained no inconsiderable degree of elaboration and refinement, were imposed the higher religious conceptions and deities of the invading Semites; whose gods became identified with the primitive totems, shared their attributes, and adopted them into their own ritual and cult. Thus from the very earliest period the crocodile, the jackal, the bull, the cat, and many others were sacred animals, interference with which was a high crime. The greater gods themselves also,

[1] *supra*, p. 26.

though depicted in human form, are represented with animal heads.

Together with these was a widespread sun and star worship, the primitive inhabitants of Egypt, as similarly placed peoples elsewhere, reverencing the heavenly bodies that were supposed to preside over and influence their own fortunes. Of the details of the early solar cult nothing is known. It became so inseparably blended with similar conceptions and observances introduced by later invaders that it is impossible to distinguish the elements due to the different sources. The worship of the sun, however, formed essentially the most stable and permanent element in Egyptian religion. Around it in varied development grouped themselves the most characteristic movements and doctrines of Egyptian thought. To the latest period the majesty of the sun symbolized to the Egyptian whatever was greatest and most enduring in the universe in which he lived.

Early Civilisation

Of the length of this prehistoric era scarcely any reliable conjecture can be formed. In the earliest period to which the records carry us back, at a date at least four or five thousand years before the birth of Christ, Egypt appears possessed of a considerable degree of civilisation, rich in the arts, and with science and resources at her command equal to the successful carrying out of great works that imply no little ability and skill. Professor Petrie dated the earliest of the tombs discovered by him at Abydos *c.* 4800 B.C., and in a more recent work[1] assigns the reign of Menes, the first king of the first dynasty, to a period nearly a thousand years earlier. Whether these high

[1] *Researches in Sinai*, 1906, p. 175.

dates will be eventually justified it is impossible to say. The evidence however of the earliest tombs and records, literary and artistic, proves that the nation must have passed through a long period of anterior development and growth, the detailed history of which is irrecoverably lost to knowledge. No narrow interval of time separates the birth of the Egyptian people from the vigorous condition of high prosperity and wellbeing which these monuments disclose.

Moreover, during the entire course of later Egyptian history there occur repetitions of that which there is reason to believe took place more than once anterior to all historical records, invasions namely, peaceable or hostile, of foreign peoples, periods when the land came especially under the influence and domination of alien races, whose customs and modes of thought, and even their national and characteristic features, left a deep impress on the habits and life of the inhabitants of the Nile valley. Egypt seems indeed to have been peculiarly susceptible to external influences, to which she was exposed under widely different circumstances, as the result both of her own foreign conquests and alliances, and of the successful attacks of her enemies. This contact, however, with outside forces and nations was not continuous, but was interrupted by periods of repose, often of long duration, in which the internal development of the people proceeded in complete independence of all forces from without.

The religious life and thought of Egypt, therefore, as it was developed in the course of the centuries, exhibits itself as a compromise, a blending together of diverse elements derived from very different sources, and in its manifold forms and aspects to a

greater or less extent reflects these various elements. They are all, however, taken up into the higher religious belief and cult of the invading Semites, and a process of adoption and amalgamation is carried on, by which, for example, the aboriginal and primitive deities are identified with the Semitic gods, and with them raised to a higher plane and given a more spiritual aspect. The Semitic faith thus introduced and imposed was itself in all probability of a predominantly solar character. But the deities of the existing population were for the most part attached to a particular locality, often with attributes and functions scarcely to be distinguished from those of the god of another town or *nome*; although the ritual might be and apparently in many instances was characterised by very great variety, in which ideas derived from fetichism or magic played a large part. The nature of the resultant faith, however, complex and many-sided as it always remained, was ultimately determined by the influence of the paramount people, and religious conceptions based upon more elevated and broader thought and experience supplanted, although they seem never to have entirely expelled the lower. And since the leading interest and desire of the new faith lay in the other world and concerned itself with the life to come, Egyptian religion became predominantly a religion of the future, and concentrated itself upon the tomb and all that was implied in the future destiny of those who found there a last resting-place upon earth. Hence throughout the entire course of their religious history the doctrines concerning the life to come, the nature and future experience of the soul, and the being and character of the gods who in the other world presided over its destinies, possessed

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for the Egyptians an extraordinary interest, and exhibited a vitality and permanence to which apparently no other doctrine ever attained. In the presence of so numerous and often conflicting elements of thought and creed as are found on the soil of Egypt, it is not easy, and is indeed often impossible, to assign each particular element to the source from which it is derived. There can, however, be no doubt that the main and most significant contribution which the Semites made to the content of the religious thought and belief of Egypt was their doctrine of the life to come.

Local Gods

With the growth of intercourse and the process of unification of the various centres of life and thought under one rule, the local gods became identified with one another, and men were led to regard them as merely forms or aspects of the same deity under different names. Certain of them also assumed gradually a position of superiority over the rest, as being the patrons of more powerful or populous cities. As each settlement or town extended its influence and authority over other towns, it would usually impose upon them its own deities, reducing the native gods to a position of inferiority and subjection. An established hegemony of this nature of the divinity of the capital city of the country or district lent itself to the development of monotheistic ideas ; and capable of being utilised by the spiritually-minded man or the philosopher, as was done, for example, in Greece and in India, to develop the conception of one supreme god, creator and lord of the many inferior deities as well as of the material universe and of man himself. This final step might not unnaturally be taken at different times and in different parts of the country.

The gods, moreover, were frequently grouped in triads, or sets of three, consisting of the god himself, his shadow or wife, and his son. Of these the most important and religiously **Triads** significant was that of Osiris, the god of the dead, his wife Isis, and his son Horus.[1] More rarely there are found combinations of seven or nine, which are apparently based upon, and developed out of more primitive groups of three; and themselves in turn give rise to later and more artificial associations of divinities worshipped at their own shrine, or in a particular district. The earliest sacred 'ennead' consisted apparently of the sun-god with his four children, representing the elements of the yet unformed universe, and the four divine children, Osiris Isis Set and Nephthys, to whom two of the former, viz. Seb or Keb the earth and Nut the heavens, subsequently gave birth.[2] These groupings were apparently in the first instance at least independent of all local attachments and arrangements, and possessed a worship and ritual which to a large extent was common to the whole country. Prominent among the early divinities, with the widest range of recognition and the most generally observed cult, were the gods that had to do with the dead and the world of shades.

It was in connection with these primitive deities of a nature-religion that there was evolved a cosmology, a doctrine of the universe, its creation and plan, which however varied

[1] Compare the paper of N. Söderblom on 'Holy Triads' in *Trans. Third Intern. Congress of the Hist. of Religions*, ii. p. 391 ff., and *infra*, p. 163. He refers to the Egyptian triad as the best-known non-Christian example of the 'mythological' triad, the first of four characteristic types which he suggests as preliminary or inferior to 'the most essential type' of holy triads (p. 398).

[2] Breasted, *History*, p. 56.

greatly in its details and apparently never attained to a universally fixed and definite norm. Different gods moreover assumed the rôle of creator, and different means were adopted to secure the desired end. In one of the most ordinary forms of the legend, heaven and earth, Nut and Seb, are forcibly separated by the intervention of the deity who thrusts himself between them, and raises the former on high. Elsewhere the germ of the future universe floats in a vast watery chaos, and in the course of ages develops into matter and form. Other accounts represent a series of births or emanations from a primeval pair, male and female; or perhaps in the endeavour to avoid a primitive dualism describe the sun-god himself as solitary creator, by free and self-willed division originating the male and female elements of the universe. Elsewhere the widespread device of a primitive egg is employed, to produce which Seb, the earth-god, impregnates himself, and from the egg the sun and moon and all living things eventually come forth; or the bodies of the first human pair are fashioned by divine hands upon the potter's wheel

Cosmology

A more curious and interesting but hardly to be accounted primitive tradition ascribes creation to the divine 'word.' This power resided especially in the god Thoth,[1] whose 'word' was of peculiar efficacy. In Egypt, as elsewhere, this conception of the power of the word was without doubt magical in its origin, and implied a certain degree of reflection, which had advanced beyond the rudest and most primitive stage of speculation. To the simplest undeveloped form of thought the object and its name are so indissolubly connected that the utterance of the latter ensures the forth-coming of the object itself, the achievement of the end in view, in the practice of later sorcery to its infinite hurt; but as a part of the creative act, to produce the name or word was equivalent to producing that which the word denoted, and had the same effect. In the religious literature of later times large use is made of this conception, and it is apparently not even necessary that the name should be articulately uttered; a gesture will suffice, or the thought of the word without audible speech.[2]

[1] *infra*, p. 80.

[2] See art. 'Religion of Egypt,' in *HDB*, vol. v., by A. Wiedemann, and the references there given; E. Naville, *Old Egyptian Faith*, London, 1909, chh. iii.–v.

References have also been traced in the inscriptions to a partial destruction of the world by fire, when the anger of Ra was manifested against man for his sin. Elsewhere the divine power rescues the world from perishing by water, and makes provision against a recurrence of the deluge. The references however are vague, and no very definite tradition on the subject seems to have existed.

Early Religious Centres

The chief centres of early religious faith and worship were Abydos in the south of Egypt, and On or Heliopolis in the Delta. Of both the sacred character dates back in all probability to pre-dynastic times. Abydos was the home of the cult of Osiris, of the myths and ritual that concerned themselves with the dark underworld, and with the expectation of a future life ; and from Abydos these conceptions and the legends associated with them seem gradually to have overspread the land. Under what circumstances Abydos first assumed this character, and came to be regarded as in an especial sense the home and habitation of the presiding deities of the world below is unknown. There were, however, centres of a similar cult in other parts of the country, each with its 'Osiris,' in harmony with the strongly local character of Egyptian religion ; and it was only as the special form of ritual and faith which had its home in Abydos increased its influence and became more powerful and widespread that it absorbed the lesser cults, their deities lost their individuality, and became identified with the more potent lord, whose name and functions supplanted their own. The same unifying process thus went on with regard to the cult and ritual of the dead that accompanied the rise to political over-lordship of the capital city of a district or nome, when the

patron or local divinity imposed his name and attributes on the rival gods of the conquered towns, whose inhabitants together with political subordination accepted the religion of their conquerors. The latter probably differed little from their own either in spirit or in form.

On or Heliopolis, as its Greek name indicates, was the great centre of the worship of the sun-god Ra. The origin of the local cult is as obscure as that of Osiris in the south. The name of the city is known to the Old Testament.[1] There the sun-god appears to have been worshipped under different names, typifying his different functions and attributes, as Harakhti (Harmachis) the hawk of the horizon, Khepera perhaps the 'vivifier,' Tum the sun at its setting, and others. With the growth of the fame and sway of Heliopolis the power and popularity of Ra also increased, and the local solar cults were incorporated in his worship, and ceased to have an independent existence. His sacred symbol was the obelisk; and from Heliopolis have been derived the obelisks which stand in the cities of London, Rome, and New York. The worship and influence of Ra appear to have been greatly advanced by the accession to power of the so-called fifth dynasty, the commencement of which is placed by Breasted *c.* 2750 B.C. These rulers adopted the new title of 'Son of Ra,' which was henceforth borne by all native Egyptian kings; and they erected great temples in honour of the sun-god, the plan and

[1] אוֹן or אָן, Gen. xli. 45, 50, xlvi. 20, Ezek. xxx. 17; in the last passage the Massoretic text has אָוֶן. The same place is no doubt intended by the בֵּית שֶׁמֶשׁ, 'house of the sun,' of Jer. xliii. 13. In Ex. i. 11 also the Septuagint text adds as a third to the store-cities built for the Pharaoh by the Israelites, Ὼν, ἥ ἐστιν Ἡλίου πόλις.

arrangement of which were modelled on those of the ancient temple of Heliopolis. Most of the leading divinities of Egypt, with the exception of those associated with the family and legends of Osiris and the cult of the dead, including even Amen of Thebes, became regarded eventually as forms of the sun-god, and were more or less closely identified with Ra.

Groups of Divinities: Ra

Thus in course of time, in a gradual process of unification of the religious beliefs of the peoples of the land, all the chief deities grouped themselves around these two great families or cycles of gods, associated respectively with the names and worship of *Ra* and *Osiris*, with one or other of whom they were all brought into relation or identified. In connection with each a rich store of myth and legend was elaborated and transmitted, and became more or less the common property and belief of all Egypt. Thus nature myths, personifications, and poetical descriptions of the natural phenomena of the sun in the heavens were associated with Ra. Ra it is who sails across the sky in a heavenly boat, and carries on perpetual warfare with the powers of darkness in the form of a great serpent, who is transfixed by the weapons of the god. On the monuments he appears as a man with the head of a hawk, and is symbolized either by the figure of a hawk, or by a circle representing the sun's disk. He rules over the world with absolute sway, and with the exception perhaps of Osiris no other deity receives so universal reverence and homage. He also alone of the great gods is unprovided with a wife. To him are sacred the bull and the fabled phoenix, the latter probably as rising in renewed life from its ashes, like the sun from the

darkness of the night. Under other names, names however which only describe different phases or aspects of the sun, he appears as *Ptah*, the Opener (cp. Heb. פתח), *Tum* or *Atum*, the Closer; the latter, therefore, would seem to have represented originally the evening sun, and to him the great temple at Pithom was dedicated. He was also the patron deity of Heliopolis itself, and the god of the nome. There was further a sun-god Horus, perhaps the midday sun, or the sun in his strength, who was later confused with the Horus of the Osirian cycle. Khepera also apparently denoted the morning sun, as quickening the world and recalling it to new life. Aten finally was the sun's disk, the celestial body visible in the heavens, the source of the beneficent glory which irradiated and made fruitful the earth. And there were many other less prominent and important forms in which the sun-god manifested himself, or was personified and worshipped in different parts of the country.

Osiris

Osiris also is regarded by many as in his origin a solar divinity. Others, however, maintain that his primitive character was that of a corn-god, a deity of vegetation, in whose annual revival after the sleep of winter the Egyptians saw a figure and promise of the resurrection.[1] At Abydos he is from the earliest times the great ruler and king of the dead. Mythologically Osiris is the son of *Seb* and *Nut*, the earth (masc.) and the heaven (fem.), and is married to his sister *Isis*, the Dawn, by whom he has a son *Horus*, who, if the myth is really solar, represents the rising

[1] J. G. Frazer, *Adonis Attis Osiris*, 1907, Bk. iii. *passim*, esp. chap. v. p. 330 ff. The story in its fullest form is recorded by Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*; see also the references in Frazer, *l.c.*

sun, by whom the darkness is overcome that has quenched the light of the preceding day. Isis herself is pictured as a woman, having on her head the sign or emblem of a throne, with the solar disk and cow's horns. Osiris as a god of right and truth takes part in the perennial contest with the powers of evil, in this case personified in his brother *Set*, the Greek *Typhon*, who is himself an ancient and mighty god with a widespread worship,—the god of darkness, and therefore of physical calamity and evil. There is evidence to show that Set himself was originally a beneficent deity, and his name and worship may be traced back at least as early as the fifth dynasty (*circa* 2750–2600 B.C., Breasted). In later times, owing perhaps to the influence of the myth in which he figured as the murderer of his brother, he came to be regarded as a power of darkness and evil, and on this account statues of him are comparatively rare.[1] On the monuments he is sometimes represented under animal form sitting erect with raised tail; elsewhere as a man with an animal's head. Following the example of his father, and in harmony with Egyptian royal custom, he is said to have married his sister Nephthys, the sun at its setting.

Osiris is overcome and slain by Set, and descends to the nether world, to become the god of the dead. There, like Pluto, or Yama in Indian mythology, he holds his court, and judges every day the souls that appear in his presence. His death is avenged by his son Horus, who in his turn slays Set, and is by him, according to one form of the myth, wounded in the eye, being therefore described as 'sitting solitary in the darkness and blindness.' In some texts Osiris appears to be spoken of as the moon;

[1] Hilton Price, in *PSBA*, vol. xxi. (1899) p. 239.

an illustration, perhaps, of the extent to which the attributes and personalities of the different gods have become blended together under the influence of communication and the interchange of thought, so that borrowing and assimilation are effected on all sides.

The chief moon-god is *Thoth* of Hermopolis, who is represented as ibis-headed, bearing upon his head the moon either full or more usually crescent. He answers to the Greek Hermes, the messenger of the gods, and in the Hall of Judgement stands by the side of Osiris, to record the deeds and sentence of the souls that come to be tried. He is the patron of learning, of geometry, and of the arts.

Thoth

Khunsu, the god of the healing art, is also in the first instance a deity of the moon, which is symbolically represented, as in the case of Thoth, by the crescent upon the head of a hawk, and is combined with the sun's disk. In his honour a great temple was built at Karnak by one of the early kings of the twentieth dynasty (*circa* 1175 B.C.), and there his worship appears to have been centralised.

The god of war was *Ment*, whose hawk's head on the monuments is surmounted by the sun's disk and a plume of feathers. He also is a deity of Upper Egypt, worshipped around Thebes. To the same district belongs *Khnum*, the ram-headed creator of the world, who fashioned it on the potter's wheel. A deity of the crops and the harvest is *Min*, of Koptos, who presided over all the processes of the renewal of life, and whose festivals celebrated the ingathering of the produce of the earth. *Nefer-Tum* also is a nature god, who bears on his head as symbol of his function and powers an opening lotus.

Other well-known gods, whose names are frequently met with, and whose figures are presented in the hieroglyphic texts, are the jackal-headed *Anubis* of Siut, a son of Osiris. He is believed to have originally symbolized the evening twilight or coming darkness, which overpowers and quenches the light of the sun, and he is therefore described as swallowing his father. Other authorities hold that at first Anubis was merely another name for Osiris.[1] He presides over all the processes of mummification ; and in the Hall of Truth or Judgement attends, apparently to test or verify the scales in which the souls of the dead or their deeds are weighed, while Thoth writes down the result on a tablet, and Osiris pronounces sentence.

Ptah is the rising sun, who was worshipped chiefly in Memphis, where he was regarded as the first ruler of the world which he had created. There was a well-known sanctuary also in his honour at Thebes, where he presided over works of building and architecture. Corresponding to the Greek Hephaestus, or the Latin Vulcan, he is the god of the manual arts ; and on the monuments is depicted in the form of a mummy wrapped closely in the usual clothing of the dead, and with his feet set upon the sign for truth. His wife is *Sekhet*, the lion-headed goddess. With their son, *Nefer-Tum*, they formed at Memphis a sacred triad.

Ptah

Amen, the principal divinity of Thebes, was identified with the sun-god Ra. His importance is no doubt due to the fact that Thebes was for so long a period the capital of the country. His name and worship, however, do not seem to have become prominent there until the period of the eleventh dynasty

Amen

[1] P. le Page Renouf, in *PSBA*, vol. xviii. p. 168.

(*circa* 2100 B.C.). Hymns are addressed to him that breathe a spirit and use language more akin to monotheism than any found elsewhere.[1] At Thebes he formed one of a triad, the remaining members of which were his wife *Mut*, the queen of heaven, who had a temple of her own in the city, and his son *Khunsu*, the moon. The monuments represent him in human form with a lofty crown of feathers. His wife has a human or lion head.

Other deities less widely reverenced than Amen, but whose names often appear on the monuments, were *Sebek*, the crocodile-god, who apparently combined opposite qualities and was perhaps originally a synthesis of different gods. In the result however he was essentially an evil deity, with a worship that had its centre in the Fayyūm. *Bast* was the cat-headed goddess presiding over the city of Bubastis in the Delta; together with *Neith*, the local goddess of Sais, who bears bow and arrows in her hand, she is supposed to have been a Libyan divinity, introduced into Egypt at an early period. *Bes* also, the misshapen dwarf, whose figure appears frequently on scarabs and amulets, is of foreign derivation. He protects royal children especially from the evil eye, and is the opponent of witchcraft and all hurtful influences.

More or less distinct traces of an animal cult are to be found in the worship of the sacred bull at Memphis. The *Apis* bull was the visible representative and dwelling-place of the god Ptah, and as

[1] For example :—'Hail to thee, Amon-Ra, Lord of the thrones of the earth . . . the ancient of heaven, the oldest of the earth, Lord of all existences . . . chief of all the gods, Lord of truth, father of the gods, maker of men, creator of beasts . . . the One alone without peer.'—*Records of the Past*, first series, vol. ii. p. 129 ff.; cp. Renouf, p. 224 ff.

divinely inspired gave oracles and pronounced decrees through the medium of the priests of its temple. At its death a public mourning was held, and its body was buried with pomp and every sign of grief in the public burying-place of Memphis. In the semi-fabulous bird, the *bennu* or phoenix, the sun-god Ra was incarnate, and its rising from the flames in renewed youth typified the breaking forth of the sun in its strength from the threatening darkness of the night. The worship of the phoenix, like that of Ra himself, had its centre at Heliopolis. The figure of the great Sphinx also, with a shrine between her feet, was certainly associated in some way with a reverence due and paid to animal divinities ; and the frequent representation of serpents in connection with tombs had a religious significance, the precise extent and meaning of which it is as yet hardly possible to define. The cow finally was sacred to *Hathor*, the queen-goddess of heaven, perhaps originally the dawn, shared in her worship, and was practically identified with the divinity who was represented by her. A sacred shrine of Hathor, with the figure of the cow-goddess intact, was discovered a few years ago at Deir-el-Bahri by Dr. Ed. Naville. The figure of the Egyptian king stands beneath the outstretched head of the animal, to symbolize the care and protection which the latter thus affords.[1]

A divinity of a different character, less definitely conceived perhaps and personified, but approaching more nearly to our ideal of a moral being, was *Mat* or *Maat*, the goddess of right and truth. She is the daughter of Ra, and wife

Maat

[1] See *Egypt Arch. Report*, 1905–06, p. 4 ff., and *Memoirs* xxviii. p. 63 ff. ; the shrine and cow are figured also in E. Naville, *Old Egyptian Faith*, London, 1909, pp. 1, 266. The monument is preserved in the Museum of Antiquities at Cairo.

of Thoth; and appears as the impersonation of abstract Law or Right, being especially active in the lower world, of which she is queen. Her hall is the scene of the judgement of the dead before Osiris; and on the monuments she is depicted as a woman with an ostrich feather on her head, the emblem of truth. On some of the sculptured scenes the king is represented offering a small figure of Maat to Osiris, in token that he approaches the god with a sincere and truth-loving heart. It would seem, therefore, that in her was expressed and revered the strict undeviating order of things which certainly in the Egyptian view was wont to make for righteousness.

Character of Deities: Unity in Variety

Thus at least the more prominent gods of Egypt all typify the regular and permanent aspects of nature, as distinguished from the fluctuating and transient. Deities of the rain, the cloud, the storm, etc., who hold so large a place in the mythologies for instance of India, of Greece, or of the ancient Germans, are here almost entirely absent. This again is what we have been led to expect from a consideration of the natural features and conditions of the country itself.

The same characteristic of regularity and persistence which thus makes itself manifest in the great figures of the Egyptian pantheon can be traced also in other aspects of the national religion and life. It would appear that throughout the long history of the people, as long as the land retained its independence in internal administration and thought, even down to the Greek and Roman eras, the fundamental beliefs and institutions of the people, both social and religious, remained comparatively unchanged. The leading doctrines of their faith,

and the habits and customs of their national life, were cherished with a wonderful tenacity and maintained intact, while in detail admitting of constant development, variation, and adaptation.[1] At the earliest period at which records are available these articles of faith and institutions of practice appear almost or altogether complete, full-grown, implying a long antecedent development and preparation; and thenceforward they do not greatly alter, or lose a nature and individuality which are characteristic of the country and people. There is a rich variety both of belief and superstition, and of observance, which is seen to be more extensive as knowledge of the literature and free access to its treasures are increased; but all is limited and, as it were, controlled within definite lines, and restrained so as to be in harmony with broad fundamental presuppositions. The development, for instance, of the tomb, and the access of magnificence in the funerary temples and furniture for the dead is most marked as the dynasties succeed one another. The same purpose, however, is served in all, and essentially the same conception would seem to underlie the ritual and observance of the tomb at all periods, namely to secure the wellbeing and to do honour to the dead, and thus to preserve the remembrance of them continually among the living. The laws and customs of the earliest reigns, so far as known, do not apparently differ in essential principles from those which the latest rulers administer.

[1] Renouf wrote many years ago of the Egyptian people that they retained 'the same fully-developed civilisation, the same religion, calendar, political divisions, gods and priesthoods, from the earliest to the latest times.'—*Hibbert Lectures*, 1879, p. 80 f. His words would, however, need some qualification in the light of more recent investigations.

It is possible, of course, that in part this unity in variety may be due to the onesidedness of our knowledge. If the records of royal wars and achievements be set aside, Egyptian literature is almost entirely religious, and its interpretation is often most difficult. The broad lines, however, of faith and practice can hardly be mistaken, or have suffered distortion at the hands of the priests, the intermediaries and exponents of the religious texts. In all that most intimately concerned their experience and daily life the people of Egypt remained practically unchanged through the vicissitudes of a history at least as changeful as that of the other prominent nations of antiquity.

Religious Literature

Of the religious literature of the Egyptians by far the most extensive and important part is the so-called 'Book of the Dead,' a collection of invocations and prayers which has been happily termed the soul's *Vademecum* in the lower world. The name was originally given by Dr. R. Lepsius, who published the text of the Turin Papyrus in 1842, and later an edition of the more ancient texts from the royal tombs of the eleventh dynasty.[1] A more descriptive title, adopted by Dr. Budge and others, is the 'Book of the Coming Forth by Day.' Dr. Naville prefers to translate 'The Book of the Coming Out *from the Day*,' *i.e.* from the limited term of human life upon earth, conceived as a day with morning noon and eventide, to a richer and

[1] *Aelteste Texte des Todtenbuchs nach Sarkophagen des altägyptischen Reichs im Berliner Museum*, Berlin, 1867. Cp. E. Naville, *Old Egyptian Faith*, p. 159 f. An edition of the Theban recension, text and translation with introduction notes and vocabulary, was published by Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge, in three volumes, London, 1898; new edition, 3 vols., London, 1910.

more enduring life in another world.[1] The older title, if less exact and suggestive, is well known and convenient, and is hardly likely to be superseded.

Book of the Dead

In its longest and most complete form the Book of the Dead contains about one hundred and ninety chapters. Each chapter is a prayer or invocation or confession, which is supposed to be recited by the deceased at a certain stage in his journey through the underworld, as a kind of charm or talisman, by virtue of which he may evade the perils that surround his path. The complex and heterogeneous character of the book, however, is illustrated by the fact that not all chapters presuppose the same conditions in the after-life. In most instances the soul is on its way to the judgement hall of Osiris, or appears there to be judged; but elsewhere the mythical conception of the sun-god predominates, and the soul accompanies him on his boat through the shades.[2] The chapters are found written upon walls of the tombs, upon the coffins or the mummies themselves, or in later times upon papyrus rolls deposited with the corpse. In the tombs of the twenty-sixth dynasty, *circa* 660 to 520 B.C., copies almost complete of the Book of the Dead have been discovered. But these copies do not agree with one another, either in the number or the arrangement of the chapters. The text itself moreover is exceedingly corrupt, containing errors and various readings to an indeterminable but very large extent; and even the earliest known copies seem to have been glossed again and again, and make use of words and expressions which, perhaps because they had become obsolete in course of time, were apparently unintelligible to the copyists.[3]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

[2] *infra*, p. 106 f.

[3] The words with which Sir P. le Page Renouf, one of the earliest and most exact of Egyptian scholars, prefaces his translation of the Book of the Dead are worth quoting in this connection: 'The Book of the Dead is not a book in the usual sense of the word; it is not a literary whole, with a beginning, middle, and end; it is a mere unmethodical collection of religious compositions (chapters), as independent of each other as the Hebrew Psalms. No two copies of the better periods contain the same

Under such circumstances an adequate translation into a modern language might well seem to be impossible ; in many passages the rendering can only be tentative, and obscurities of reading and interpretation remain, together with mythological allusions, the meaning of which is altogether uncertain. No two manuscripts or copies moreover contain precisely the same chapters, nor do these follow uniformly the same order. The most complete manuscript extant is a papyrus preserved in the Royal Museum at Turin, of uncertain date, but not earlier than the twenty-sixth dynasty, which includes one hundred and sixty-five chapters. Many chapters, however, known from other sources, are omitted ; and some of these are proved by internal evidence to be of great antiquity.

Recensions

There can be little doubt that this miscellaneous collection of sacred texts had its origin in magical incantations or charms, handed down orally from generation to generation, the possession probably of a particular caste or class of priests or magicians, who were able by means of these spells to conjure away the demons who threatened harm and disaster to the living and the dead. Parts at least of the book as now extant

chapters, or follow the same order. The text of each chapter is in the highest degree uncertain, and was already so at a very early date. The various readings arise partly from the differences of meaning attached by the copyists to certain groups of words, but in great part from the gross carelessness or ignorance of the copyists. . . . But supposing the text to be settled, difficulties of another kind beset the translator. The grammar is extremely simple, and the vocabulary is tolerably well made out. But what sense can be extracted from the text? A sentence may be quite literally rendered without its conveying the meaning of the original. . . . No one is capable of translating a single chapter of the Book of the Dead who has wrong ideas about the religion and mythology of Egypt, and is unable to understand the numerous technical or mystical expressions which everywhere occur.'—*PSBA*, vol. xiv. (1891) p. 37 f. The best and most complete rendering into English is that of Dr. Budge, referred to above, p. 86 n.

are of very considerable antiquity; but its beginnings and early history are entirely unknown. It is natural to suppose that the chapters did not all originate in one place, or belong to one circle of thought, as they certainly are not the product of any single epoch. Moreover, at the time when the earliest of them were first committed to writing, in some instances at least the knowledge of the meaning and significance of phrases employed in the text had already been lost. Thus a rubric to the sixty-fourth chapter, from the papyrus of Nu, runs as follows:—

> This chapter was found in the foundations of the shrine of Hennu by the chief mason during the reign of his majesty, the king of the north and of the south, Hesepti, triumphant; who carried (it) away as a mysterious object which had never (before) been seen or looked upon.[1]

The tomb of king Hesepti, the fifth king of the first dynasty, was found by Flinders Petrie at Abydos,[2] and his reign is dated by him in the second half of the fifth millennium B.C.; according to J. H. Breasted the period of the first dynasty must be placed later by a thousand years.[3] If the rubric may be trusted the text was even at this remote period so old as to be mysterious and unintelligible.

Parts therefore of the collections of texts which subsequently came to be known as the Book of the Dead were already in existence at this early date, and their beginning and source must lie, it would seem, almost in prehistoric times. The background and substratum of the book therefore is an ancient magical literature, oral and popular, of which only fragments have been preserved; and around the

[1] Budge, vol. iii. p. 118 f.

[2] See *Royal Tombs*, 2 vols., London, 1899 and 1901.

[3] *History of Egypt*, p. 14, and Chronological Table, p. 597.

original nucleus have gathered accretions from many sources and of very varied nature, but all exhibiting the same character of magical incantation or charm, and all pressed into the service of the dead.

For a period of about five hundred years, during the reigns of the monarchs of the second and third dynasties, under whom the land of Egypt made great advance in civilisation and the arts, no actual trace of the Book of the Dead seems to have been found. The suggestion lies near to hand that in an age of rapid material progress and of great gain in every department of the material life, interest in the world to come would tend to be less universal, and to exact a less tribute of attention and care. The inference would not however be justified that the Book of the Dead, or as much of it as was known under the first dynasty, had been forgotten or had ceased to exist. It was overshadowed by the prevailing temporal prosperity, and its influence and popularity perhaps greatly circumscribed, but the priests, its custodians, would care for the preservation of their sacred and ritual texts, and in times of straitness or distress their efficacy would again be tested and recourse be had to their protection. If moreover, as analogy would seem to render probable, the recitation of the texts was essential to the due performance of the religious ceremonies, this also would ensure that they should be kept in remembrance at least by those whose duty it was to preside over the rites; while at the same time, as being a kind of esoteric knowledge, the communication of them to others or the committing of them to writing would be discouraged.

Under the fourth dynasty however (2900–2750 B.C., Breasted), there would seem to have been a

revival of interest in the Book of the Dead, and a more widespread regard for its teaching. To more than one chapter a rubric to the following effect is attached :—

> This chapter was found in the city of Khemennu (Hermopolis Magna) under the feet of [the statue of] this god. [It was inscribed] upon a slab of iron of the south (i.e. basaltic stone) in the writing of the god himself, in the time of the majesty of the king of the north and of the south, Menkaura, triumphant,[1] by the royal son Heru-ṭâ-ṭâ-f, who discovered it whilst he was on his journey to make an inspection of the temples and of their estates.[2]

Menkaura was the fourth king of the fourth dynasty, and reigned *c.* 2850 B.C. according to Breasted, but others place his date eight or nine hundred years earlier. His pyramid stood at Gizeh, and there his coffin and mummy were discovered in 1837. Parts of both coffin and mummy were unfortunately lost at sea on their way to England, and only parts are preserved in the British Museum. In the Egyptian annals he is credited with the long reign of about sixty years. The rubric seems to imply that the chapters in question were found in the course of repairs or other investigations undertaken in connection with the temples, and that the discovery was regarded as of sufficient importance to be recorded in a special note. The probability

[1] The epithet or description, *ma-kheru*, which continually recurs, has been variously rendered. The above translation, which is that of Dr. Budge, is adopted also by Naville,—'"victorious" or "triumphant one" suits the Egyptian idea better' (*op. cit.*, p. 167). M. Maspero prefers 'true-voiced,' *i.e.* uttering correctly the charm or incantation necessary at each stage of the soul's journey; see note in *Athen.*, September 11, 1909, p. 305.

[2] Budge, vol. iii. pp. xlvii. ff., 80, cp. p. 119; E. Naville, *op. cit.*, p. 167 ff.

that the notes quoted convey true historical information is rendered greater, as Dr. Naville points out, by the fact that they refer to rulers whose courts were at This and Memphis respectively, while the tradition has been preserved by the priests of Thebes.

The brief inscription on the coffin of Menkaura gives what is perhaps the earliest written expression to a doctrine most characteristic of Egyptian thought, which illustrates how fully the thinkers of Egypt carried forward into the next world their conception of a life whose fullness and continuity depended upon union with the god. The doctrine in question is obscure, but the dead man is greeted in the name of Osiris, and was apparently identified with him:—

> 'Hail Osiris, king of the North and South, Men-kau-Rā, living for ever! born of heaven, conceived of Nut, heir of Seb his beloved. The mother Nut . . . granteth that thou mayest exist as a god without thy foes, O king of the North and South, Men-kau-Rā, living for ever.' [1]

The rulers of the fifth and sixth dynasties appear to have originated from a different line to those of the fourth, although the capital was still maintained at Memphis. Manetho asserts that they came from Elephantine, near Assuan, on the Upper Nile. In their time (*circa* 2750–2475, Breasted) there would seem to have been a revival of literary interest, and of the practice of literary composition and perpetuation in writing of already existing work. The earliest dated papyrus of any length or importance, the well-known Precepts of Ptah-hotep,[2] belongs to the period

[1] Budge, p. xlix.; cp. *British Museum Guide to Egyptian Rooms* (1898), p. 20 ff., and *infra*, p. 104.

[2] *Records of the Past*, second series, iii. p. 1 ff.; Breasted, pp. 107 f., 204; B. G. Gunn, in 'Wisdom of the East' Series, London, 1908; and often elsewhere.

of the fifth dynasty. The pyramids of these rulers at Saqqārah were explored by M. Maspero in 1881 and following years, and the walls of the tombs and corridors were found to be covered with inscribed chapters from the Book of the Dead, accompanied by coloured scenes illustrative of the work and occupations of the deceased in the future life.[1] This 'Recension' of the Book of the Dead is known as the Heliopolitan, because it is supposed to be due to the priests of On or Heliopolis, and to express their views on the after-life and the future fate of the soul. There is however no unity or consistency of doctrine or belief in these texts, and some of them at least belong to a considerably earlier period than that at which they found a permanent place in the tombs at Saqqārah. They present, however, the first complete or fairly complete *written* compilation of the chapters of the Book of the Dead.

With the close of the sixth dynasty an uncertain and disturbed period of Egyptian history began, which continued until the rise of Thebes to power in the eleventh and twelfth dynasties, an interval that Dr. Breasted estimates at from 275 to 300 years. During this period the continuous record of the Book of the Dead was again broken. Under the rule of the two succeeding dynasties however, for about four hundred years, the coffins of the dead were covered both within and without with inscribed chapters, the choice of which seems to be determined by no fixed rule; and pictured scenes recur of similar character to those in the earlier pyramids. The writing itself is 'priestly' or hieratic, of a more cursive nature than the original hieroglyphic. The recension which has thus been preserved, and

[1] Budge, p. L ff.; E. Naville, *op. cit.*, p. 78 ff.; etc.

which remained in continuous use for so long a period, has received the name of the ' Memphitic.'

Once again during the confused and troubled period that is covered in part by the foreign domination of the Hyksos, until the revival of national consciousness and the rise of the eighteenth dynasty in the early part of the sixteenth century B.C., the historical record fails. The succeeding period of five centuries however, during which the eighteenth and two following dynasties held sway, has been referred to as the ' golden age ' of the Book of the Dead. For the first time the texts are found written on papyrus rolls, and the multiplication of copies has been connected with the introduction and wide dissemination of this convenient material for writing purposes. Essentially the same recension known as the ' Theban ' maintained its ground for a further period of more than three hundred years, under the rulers of the twenty-first and twenty-second dynasties. Deterioration however had set in, and both in the language and writing, and in the character of the illustrations, the later papyri are so far inferior to the earlier that some scholars have seen in them representatives of a somewhat variant recension. The differences appear to be hardly of sufficient importance to warrant the conclusion. This Theban recension, moreover, does not vary in substance from the earlier texts of Heliopolis and Memphis. The chapters are generally the same as in the previous recensions from which they are taken over or adapted, but the illustrations are greatly elaborated, and in some instances appear to have been regarded as more important and significant than the text itself. It is this Theban recension, supposed to have been elaborated and controlled by the priests of Amen at Thebes, that

Dr. Budge edited for the first time in a complete form with translation and vocabulary in 1898. In the papyri there are found occasionally chapters that are not known from any other source, but the number of these is small in proportion to the whole.

From and after the overthrow of the twenty-second dynasty and the rise of a new family to power deterioration proceeded more rapidly. The decay of the national spirit and life was accompanied by a corresponding loss of interest in the religious literature which expressed and enshrined the individual and national hopes of a future life. With the temporary restoration of native authority after the expulsion of the Assyrian power in the middle of the seventh century B.C., the religious consciousness of the people also revived, and led to renewed interest in the Book of the Dead. Once more probably under priestly inspiration and direction papyrus copies were multiplied, collated and edited with care, and an attempt at least was made to give a fixed and definite form to the text. In all this critical work it would probably not be wrong to see traces of Greek influence, suggesting harmony and design. The recension is known as the 'Saïte,'

[1] Some of these rolls are of a very great length. The 'Papyrus of Ani,' for example, in the British Museum, published in facsimile by the Trustees of the Museum in 1894, is seventy-eight feet long and fifteen inches wide. Other rolls extend to an even greater length, the width varying from twelve to eighteen inches. The Papyrus of Ani is the most beautiful in its illustrations of any known roll of the Book of the Dead, and its text forms the basis of Dr. Budge's edition, for which, however, several other papyri were consulted. The roll is supposed to have been written at Thebes about the middle of the second millennium B.C. It came into the possession of the Trustees in the year 1888, and forms one of the most artistic and valuable treasures of the Museum.

from the town of Saïs, in Lower Egypt. Substantially the whole is derived from the earlier recensions, but in the vocabulary there is found a small number of new words of foreign origin, the source of which is probably to be traced to the Nubian invaders from the south. Artistically in their decorations the rolls are greatly inferior to those of the Theban epoch.

Under the Ptolemaic rulers, 332-30 B.C., Greek influence, as might be expected, is more decided. New chapters were incorporated, and while the ancient beliefs, in so far as they were spiritual and unearthly, were retained in full vigour, there seems to have been an endeavour to purify the texts from all implications of magical process or custom, and to eliminate that which was judged to be unworthy or obsolete. The scribes also in many instances were ignorant of the ancient Egyptian language, and were themselves perhaps Greek by birth or training. What is known as the Turin Papyrus, containing more than one hundred and fifty chapters, is generally regarded as the best example of this period. Colouring is used for the titles and rubrics of the text, as well as for the illustrations; but the character and detail of the pictures show progressive loss of artistic power and expression.

Finally, in the Roman period, from 30 B.C. onwards, the texts of the Book of the Dead continue to be used in connection with the burial rites, and are inscribed on the mummy wrappings and on papyrus rolls deposited in the grave with the corpse. They are employed however as little else than magical charms to defend the dead from harm, or perhaps merely in maintenance of ancient practice. And as long as the art of mummifying the dead was observed, so long the Book of the Dead remained

formally in use, though doubtless long obsolete in spirit, and perhaps for some centuries commanding little of real belief or popular assent to its doctrines. Its complete and final disuse has been traced to Christian influence. Of this, however, there is no direct proof. Dr. Budge quotes an example from a coffin preserved at Paris, the date of which is about the end of the second century A.D.[1]

Enduring Influence

Thus in vitality and the enduring nature of its influence no religious composition of any age or people can compare with the Egyptian Book of the Dead. If the lower dates for the accession to power of the earlier dynasties, favoured by Dr. Breasted and others, be accepted, it yet had a chequered existence, known and valued by the people, their treasured possession and guard in death and the after-life, at least of more than four thousand years. Unless a religious character and an early date are to be ascribed to the Confucian texts, the Hebrew Scriptures and the Hindu Vedas will take the second place. But they are second *longo intervallo*. Moreover throughout this period, in the midst of much variety of practice and detail, the essential nature of the teaching of the Egyptian compositions and their more important doctrines on the subjects of the after-life and the survival of the soul, remained unchanged. In these respects the latest forms and copies of the text repeat and renew the beliefs

[1] *Book of the Dead*, iii. p. lxxii. The foregoing brief account is indebted at every point to Dr. Budge's most able and lucid summary in the Introduction to his translation. A second edition of Dr. Budge's work was issued in three vols. in 1910. Cp. the same author's publication of the *Papyrus of Ani* from the British Museum copy, 1895; and *The Mummy*, London, 1893.

expressed in the earlier. And while too much significance must not be read into words or phrases, the higher import and implications of which were perhaps beyond the range of many who used them, —as such phrases are to-day even in a Christian setting,—it remains one of the most striking facts of religious history that in Egypt beliefs of the most lofty and inspiring nature should have held the people in a unique manner through the course of so many centuries.[1]

Chapters, Titles, and Contents

The titles of the chapters are in many instances suggestive, and were doubtless intended both to indicate their contents, and to be a guide to their use by the deceased in the underworld; for example, 'The Chapter of Coming Forth by Day and of Living after Death' (ii.),[2] 'Of

[1] Authorities still differ very widely as to the dates of the early rulers of Egypt. A comparison of some of them will be found in the article on Egypt in *HDB*, i. p. 657. The following summary, however, may be useful for the history of the recensions of the Book of the Dead. Dr. Petrie's earlier dates usually represent the one extreme, Dr. Breasted's the other; and where so much disagreement exists it is impossible to feel absolute confidence in any determination.

Indications of the existence of parts at least of the Book of the Dead are to be found in the first and fourth dynasties, Hesepti and Menkaura, *circa* 4700 and 3800 B.C. (Petrie), *c.* 3400 and 2850 B.C. (Breasted).

Recension.	*Dynasties.*	*Petrie.*	*Breasted.*
Heliopolitan	v., vi.	*c.* 3700–3330	*c.* 2750–2475
Memphite	xi., xii.	*c.* 3300–2560	*c.* 2160–1788
Theban	xviii. to xxii.	*c.* 1580–745	1580–745
Saïte	xxvi.		663–525
Ptolemaic		332–30 B.C.	
Roman		30 B.C. onwards.	

[2] The numbers are according to Dr. Budge's edition.

Coming Forth by Day after having made the Passage through the Tomb' (ix.), 'Of Giving a Heart to the Deceased in the Underworld' (xxvi.), 'Of not Letting the Deceased be Devoured by Serpents in the Underworld' (xxxv.), 'Of Breathing the Air and of having Dominion over the Water in the Underworld' (lviii.), 'Of a Man Transforming Himself into whatever Form he Pleaseth' (lxxvi.), 'Of Causing the Soul to be United to the Body in the Underworld' (lxxxix.), 'Of Entering into the Hall of Maat' (cxxv.), 'Of Travelling in the Great Boat of Ra' (cxxxvi.), 'Of Providing the Deceased with Food in the Underworld' (cxlviii.), 'Of Setting up the Funeral Bed' (clxix.), etc. Other chapters are litanies or hymns in praise of Ra or Osiris.

The opening words of the Book of the Dead are as follows :—

> The beginning of the chapters of Coming Forth by Day, of the songs of praise and worship, and of the coming forth from and entering into the glorious Neter-Khert in the beautiful Amentet,[1] to be recited on the day of the burial (whereby the deceased) shall go in after coming forth. Thus saith Osiris :—
>
> Hail to thee, O bull of Amentet,[2] the god Thoth, the everlasting king is here.
>
> I am the great god in the divine bark who have fought for thee.
>
> I am one of the gods, the divine chiefs who make Osiris to be victorious over his adversaries on the day of the weighing of the words ; I am thy kinsman, Osiris.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> O ye who unclose the ways and open the roads to perfected souls in the house of Osiris, unclose then the ways and open the roads to the soul of Osiris, who is with you, let him enter boldly and come forth in peace at the house of Osiris, without hindrance and without repulse. Let him

[1] *i.e.* The underworld.

[2] The bull of A. is Osiris.

enter at his pleasure, and go forth at his will triumphantly with you; and let that be executed which he shall order in the house of Osiris.

No lightness of his in the scale has been found, and the balance is relieved of his case.[1]

We never read of a soul being turned back from the bar of Osiris. Without exception they seem to pass the ordeal successfully, and enter into the abode of the great king. Nor is any indication given as to the fate of those, if any, who are rejected. The presence of the threatening 'Devourer' in some of the Judgement Scenes is apparently little more than formal; and the demons who at various points obstruct the passage of the deceased through the underworld are without difficulty put to flight by the use of the appropriate spell or conjuration. In the judgement Hall of Maat the deceased in the form of a mummy appeared before Osiris, and his soul was weighed against a feather, the symbol of righteousness. There he was required to assert, and presumably to prove, his guiltlessness of wrong-doing of any kind. Nothing however is said of any further test. This protestation of innocence is made in the terms of the great 'Negative Confession,' as it has been called:—

Hail to Thee, O great God, thou Lord of double Maat. . . . I know thee and I know thy name and I know the names of the two and forty gods who exist with thee in this Hall of double Maat. . . . In truth I have come to thee, and I have brought Maat to thee, and I have destroyed wickedness for thee.

I have done no wrong to man.
I have not oppressed my kindred.
I have not wrought evil in the place of right and truth.

. . . . . .

[1] Budge, p. 20 ff.; *PSBA*, xiv. p. 213 f.

I have not ill-treated servants.
I have not scorned the gods.
I have not defrauded the oppressed one of his property.
I have not done that which is an abomination unto the gods.
I have hurt no servant with his master.
I have not caused pain.
I have made no man to suffer hunger.
I have made no one to weep.
I have done no murder.

. . . . . .

I have not defrauded the temples of their oblations,
I have not purloined the cakes of the gods,
I have not robbed the dead of their funereal food.

. . . . . .

I have propitiated the god with that which he loveth. I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, a boat to the shipwrecked. I have made oblations to the gods, and funeral offerings to the departed. Deliver me therefore; protect me therefore; and report not against me in presence of the great god.

I am one whose mouth is pure, and whose hands are pure, to whom there is said 'Come, come in peace,' by those who look upon him.[1]

The title of the hundred and fifth chapter is remarkable; the 'Chapter whereby one propitiateth the Ka,' or 'Of Making Offerings to the Ka in the Underworld.'[2]

Hail to thee, my Ka, my coeval.
May I come to thee and be glorified and made manifest and ensouled, let me have strength and soundness.
Let me bring to thee grains of incense, wherewith I may purify myself, and may also purify thine own overflow.
The wrong assertions that I have uttered, and the wrong resistance which I have offered, let them not be imputed to me.

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[1] Budge, p. 190 ff.; *PSBA*, xvii. pp. 216 ff., 273 ff.
[2] *PSBA*, xvi. p. 270 f.; Budge, p. 165 f.

For I am the green gem, fresh at the throat of Ra, given by those who are at the horizon. Their freshness is my freshness, the freshness of my Ka is like theirs, and the dainties of my Ka are like theirs.

Thou who liftest the hand at the balance, and raisest law to the nose of Ra in this day, do not thou put my head away from thee. For am I not the eye that seeth? and am I not the ear that heareth? and am I not the bull of the sacrificial herd, are not the mortuary gifts for me, and those who live in the heights?

Grant that I may go forward by thee, and may purify myself, and may cause Osiris to triumph over his enemies.

Attention has often been called to the high moral tone of the Confession, and the detailed character of the wrongs of which it takes cognisance. In the latter respect it goes beyond the Hebrew Decalogue, to which it has been compared. Parallels also have been noted between the language and thought of the Book of the Dead and Gnostic literature, especially the *Pistis Sophia*, and in this respect Egyptian influence penetrated far beyond the limits of its own land. It is evident also from its contents, miscellaneous as they are, that the Book presupposes a considerable advance in ethical knowledge and consciousness, and a state of society in which a lofty moral standard is recognised and enforced. If the undertone is magic and conjuration, at least in parts the tone rises to an elevation of precept and thought which is not unworthy of the high position which the nation so long retained.

In the first instance therefore at least the Book of the Dead is not a book of religious instruction or a manual of theology, but a collection of potent charms and a handbook to knowledge, of which it was essential that the deceased should be in possession in order to guard against the perils of the way. In this last respect it is noticeable how great and how

frequent is the stress laid upon acquaintance with the *names* both of the adversaries he encounters and of the objects he sees.[1] Other themes however find a place, more or less incidental or important. Invocations of worship and praise are recorded, not only to the chief gods Ra and Osiris, but to other deities as to Thoth, who perform offices in the underworld. Descriptive passages occur in which the rules and processes of mummification are set forth, the employments and manner of life of the dead, or the way in which in the beginning the universe came into being and was upheld by the power and *fiat* of the great gods. It is nevertheless from the Book of the Dead, not perhaps alone but as the main source, that a reliable conception of the doctrinal teaching and beliefs of the Egyptians can alone be formed. The impression that it contains more than one 'system,' and gives expression to variant traditions, has been confirmed by the more detailed and exact study that it has received within recent years. As a whole, however, it may be said to be in harmony with other ancient systems of doctrinal teaching, in that it presupposes a theory of justification by works, but in a negative rather than a positive sense. Before the bar of Osiris the deceased pleads his own guiltlessness of wrong. He has fulfilled the golden rule, so far as its negative side is concerned; and he claims acquittal, not by the mercy of the god, but because he deserves and has a right to a verdict in his favour. So far as can be seen his claim is uniformly admitted, and he always issues triumphant from the judgement hall. There is therefore no consciousness of sin, or need for pardon in the Christian sense of the term. The deceased has not done wrong, and requires no consideration

[1] Cp. *infra* p. 104.

or forgiveness. His works justify him, and on the ground of these he is accepted and allowed to pass.

The Deceased and Osiris

The most remarkable and striking feature however of the doctrinal teaching of the Book of the Dead is the consistent identification of the dead man with Osiris. He is addressed by the latter's name, and is clearly regarded as in some sort united with him. That this union also was in part at least the ground of his acceptance at the bar of judgement can hardly be doubted. The belief itself is of ancient date, and has been traced back as far as the fifth dynasty. Its origin however is uncertain. By some authorities the doctrine has been regarded as a further instance of the virtue conceived to reside in a name. To call the deceased by his name was equivalent to making him Osiris in fact; all that the name meant and implied in the one case, it would of necessity connote in the other; and thus to name the deceased was to throw over and around him the shield of the personality of the god. Others with less probability have endeavoured to connect the practice with tribal or totemistic conceptions. The purpose of the identification was to assure for the deceased a personal resurrection and life after death. In and with Osiris he would rise from the dead; to be named by his name was to share his fortune and his life. There is no indication that the death of Osiris was regarded as possessing a sacrificial virtue or potency of any kind, or that any inherent value was conceived to reside in it, which might be communicated to or made efficacious for another. The deceased had simply become Osiris; and would therefore live the same life, revived and perpetuated, as the god.

LITERATURE.—There is little to be added to the literature above cited. Cp. however the article on 'Egyptian Religion' by W. M. F. Petrie in *ERE*, vol. v.; H. R. Hall, in *Handbook for Egypt and the Sudan*, London, 1907, p. [150], and the descriptions of the paintings and inscriptions in the tombs; G. Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*[2], London, 1896, pp. 183 ff., 198 ff., 224, 398, and the literature to which reference is there made.

Other Sacred Books

The Book of the Dead, however, was not the only compendium of precept and observance which claimed to provide the soul of the deceased with the needful passport to the world beyond, to describe its inhabitants, and to fortify against its dangers. In the flourishing period of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties, when it is apparent that religious interest and speculation were rife, there were at least three such collections,[1] of which the Book of the Dead was undoubtedly the most important. In their origin they were all associated with the cults of different and independent divinities, but all in course of time and by the necessity of the case were compelled to recognise Osiris as lord of the dead, and to accord to him the chief place in the world over which he ruled supreme. It was his cult therefore, localised originally as the ancient and primitive faith of the Egyptian Delta, which gradually made its way up the valley of the Nile,

[1] (1) *Per-em-hru*, the Coming Forth by Day; (2) *Shāt ent am Ṭuat*, or *Shāt am Ṭuat*, the Book of that which is in Ṭuat; (3) the 'Book of Gates,' i.e. the gates of Ṭuat. Compare also the 'Book of the Two Roads of the Blessed Dead,' *Egypt Expl. Fund Report*, 1902–03, p. 22; and Budge, vol. iii. p. clxxxiii ff. There seems no reason indeed why such collections of texts should not have been indefinitely multiplied.

absorbing the local cults and assimilating the local gods, and thus became the dominant creed in all that concerned the wellbeing or otherwise of the soul after death.

Of the others the most distinctive and characteristic is known as the Book *Am-Tuat*,[1] or the Book of the doings or events in the Egyptian Under-world.[2] With much picturesque detail is described in twelve divisions the passage of the Sun-god in his divine boat through the regions of the world below, from west to east, from his setting to his rising again, until he reappeared on the eastern horizon once more to illuminate the upper world. Within this framework are contained legends and myths, fragments of folk-lore and popular tales, some parts of which are undoubtedly of considerable age. The motive of the whole appears to have been the exaltation of Amen-Ra, the patron god of Thebes, and a natural inference would be that the work took form within the circle of the priestly colleges of Thebes, and owed its popularity and importance to the inspiration of the cult there established. It is designed to exhibit the Sun-god as sovereign ruler no less of the lower world and of the darkness than of the day; in his divine boat he passes as lord through the realms

Am-Ṭuat

[1] See E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Egyptian Heaven and Hell*, 3 vols., London, 1906, in which the texts are translated and described. To Dr. Budge's work I am indebted for the brief account here given.

[2] Translated and discussed also by Maspero in *Revue des Religions*, 1888 f. The original meaning of the name is uncertain. Ṭuat was the home or dwelling-place of departed spirits, but was not believed to be beneath the earth, and was perhaps allowed to remain as an undefined and indefinable region of darkness that lay beyond the known world of light and day; see Budge, vol. iii. p. 87 ff.

of the shades, claiming and receiving the homage of all, and only those who take passage with him, under his protection, are able to pass unscathed through the perils that beset their way. Older parts of the work, which have been incorporated into its later form, are believed to originate from the ritual and teaching of the early solar cult of On.

The twelve divisions of the Ṭuat clearly represent the twelve hours into which the night is divided, corresponding to the twelve hours of the day in which the Sun-god traverses the heavens. The general conception of the Underworld seems to be that of a series of immense halls or worlds, through which a great river flows, a reproduction or counterpart of the earthly Nile. Along this river the boat of the Sun-god is carried, propelled and escorted by a multitude of gods and other attendants, whose names and functions and offices are given in the texts. In each division his advent is greeted with acclamations of joy; he comes bringing gladness and light, and as he leaves again all relapses into darkness and silence until his return on the following night. The righteous pass on with him into safety, but the wicked are seized and subjected to unspeakable tortures by the executioners of punishment. It would seem therefore that, in contrast to the Book of the Dead, there existed in this phase or department of the Egyptian religion a very definite doctrine of retribution for the evil-doer. And it is believed by some that early Christian conceptions of the lot and sufferings of the wicked have been derived in part from these delineations. Certainly here at least in very realistic and convincing fashion the wicked 'suffer the punishment of eternal fire.'[1]

[1] Cp. *Jude*, 7.

Four divisions of the Tuat, vi. to ix., are definitely assigned as the kingdom of Osiris. Through these however the Sun-god passes as through the others, illuminating and bringing blessings; nor is he apparently under any obligation to their overlord or in any way subjected to him. The intention is clearly to exalt the solar divinity, to represent him as supreme by night as well as by day, and to show that even in the realms of Osiris he does as he pleases and his divine rights and sovereignty remain unimpaired. The tone of the whole moreover is more dramatic and realistic, both the joys and the sufferings are conceived in more materialistic terms than in the descriptions of the Book of the Dead, or the series of legends and beliefs that centre around the name of Osiris. To the latter cycle the conception of the Hall of Judgement, with its attendant scenes and circumstances, appears entirely to belong.

> The conception of the boat of the Sun-god, the 'boat of millions of years,' is apparently derived from the same fundamental thought as the chariot and horses of the sun in Greece and India. The best and most efficient modes of travelling to which the people are accustomed are attributed to the deity. He moves as a prince or sovereign might be supposed to move, at his ease and with the utmost pomp and magnificence, the ordinary methods and processes of earth being conceived as repeated in the realms of darkness and of the dead.

Book of Gates

In the third work that is occupied with the circumstances and events of the underworld, the 'Book of Gates,'[1] the worship and cult of Osiris again take the foremost place, as in the Book of the Dead. The Sun-god is represented as passing through the

[1] Known also as the 'Book of Hades,' and translated under that name by E. Lefébure in *Records of the Past*, first series, vol. x. p. 79 ff., and vol. xii. p. 3 ff. The twelve 'gates' are in all

twelve compartments or divisions, the approach to each of which, with the exception of the first, is protected by a door at which appointed guardians keep watch. The supremacy and rights however of Osiris are maintained in this his own kingdom of the dead, and scenes of judgement are depicted in which his office is that of final arbiter and judge. The significance in many respects both of text and illustrations is uncertain, and criticism has done little up to the present to elucidate them. It is evident, however, that a close relation exists between the beliefs and doctrines assumed and those of the Book of the Dead. The earlier portions of the work consist of magical incantations, formulae, charms, etc., the correct use and pronunciation of which will ensure immunity from the dangers of the way; but in the later parts ethical teaching and conceptions assert themselves. Worship according to Maat, truth and justice, is right worship, and the servant of Osiris who orders his life in harmony with Maat will receive his reward therefor, and will live for ever with Osiris in his kingdom. The wicked are consumed with fire; but the righteous live by virtue of a kind of spiritual communion with the lord of the dead, partaking daily of the body of the god.

From these texts therefore, and from the paintings and illustrations associated with them on the walls of the tombs and elsewhere, a fairly definite conception may be formed of Egyptian belief with regard to the condition and manner of life of the souls that have passed into the underworld. The dead are

State of the Dead

probability intended to correspond with the hours of the night. The first division however is apparently without an entrance door, and the twelfth or last has two.

represented as engaged for the most part in agriculture, ploughing sowing or reaping, and in the various occupations connected therewith; sailing on the heavenly Nile, the prototype of the earthly, making offerings to the gods, and in other respects conducting themselves as they were wont to do in this life. It is accordingly evident that the future existence was conceived of as a renewal of the present, but under more favourable conditions, free from the accidents and disappointments that are here encountered, and that it was more or less idealised.[1] After death the man begins a new life, which is in general terms a reproduction of the old under happier auspices, relieved of all the present liability to failure distress and suffering. In harmony with this conception of a renewal of earthly conditions, there were placed by the side of the mummy in the tomb articles of dress, implements of toil, of war, or of the chase, furniture and equipment of every kind, that so ample provision might be made for all the requirements of the deceased under the new circumstances in which he found himself.

Constituents of the Man: the Ka

Among the most uncertain and difficult of the doctrines of the Egyptians is their theory of the nature and constitution of the individual. The uncertainty is due in large measure to the fact that the representations of the texts are not always consistent with one another. And it is probable that the theory itself was never clearly thought out or conceived as a whole. It was, however, believed that both before and after

[1] This ideal character of the paintings in the tombs is emphasized by Dr. Naville, *op. cit.*, p. 66 ff.; the wealth and felicity of the deceased are a picture not of what he had, but of what he would like to have had in this world.

death the man was in his nature not simple but composite, a grouping and more or less close union of several distinct parts. But these parts are not always defined or enumerated alike, and in some instances it is difficult to understand what function one or the other discharged. The most important, to which reference is most frequently made, is the *ka*, Copt. ΚΩ, the living and immortal representative of the man, his image or εἴδωλον, sometimes translated 'genius' or 'double.' In the hieroglyphic texts the *ka* is represented by a pair of upraised arms, and on the monuments it is seen in the form of a child or dwarf, in close attendance on the man. After death the *ka* was believed to visit the tomb for the purpose of feeding on the gifts provided; and it was for the benefit of the *ka* that the offerings were placed in the tomb. To the *ka* were ascribed all the attributes of the man, including even such physical capacities as eating and drinking; these last cravings, in the absence of actual offerings, might be satisfied from the pictures or painting on the walls. The *ka* moreover was not confined to the visible material body, but was free to move at will from place to place, and could take up its abode temporarily in a statue or other object. The gods also had their *kas*, who held to them precisely the same relation as the εἴδωλον to the true man, shadowy reflections of the real personality. The *ka* was not subject to death, and after a more or less prolonged period might apparently enter again upon a corporeal existence.[1]

[1] It would appear probable, therefore, that the conception of the *ka* had its rise in the appearances of dreams, and the active imagination which shapes before it the visible forms of those who are absent. The unsubstantial double of a man finds a place in many systems of primitive belief. See also on the

Other Constituents

Other immortal parts of the man, separable and separated from him at death and commencing then to lead an independent life, were the *ba* or soul, depicted as a bird with a human head, hovering over the corpse, which it quits at the moment of death, and to which it restores life again when it returns from heaven. The *ba* also is sometimes said to feed upon the offerings in the tomb. Usually however it dwells on high with Ra, and only occasionally revisits the earth and the tomb where is preserved the body in which it formerly dwelt. The *ab*, or heart, is the part of the man which is represented in the judgement scene before Osiris. There it confronted the dead man, and bore witness to his deeds, good or evil; and there the *ab* was weighed in the balance, and the result noted by Thoth, the recorder. The *ab* was the seat and source therefore, not only of feeling and of life, but of moral determination, of righteousness or of guilt; it connoted will as well as sensation. The preservation of the *ab* was of the greatest importance, and a special magical efficacy attached to charms or amulets made in the shape of a heart.

Man possessed also or would possess two bodies, a physical or material body and a spiritual. The former is the *khat*, which after death is submitted to the processes of mummification, apparently in order that it may be preserved for future use,

nature of the *ka* G. Foucart in *ERE*, ii. p. 764 ff.; W. M. F. Petrie, *ib.* v. p. 241; Eg. Explor. Fund Memoir 'Dendereh,' p. 40 f.; E. Naville, *op. cit.*, p. 56 ff.; etc. Compare the conception of the *Kalid* in some of the Pacific Islands, as described in De la Saussaye, vol. i. p. 42 f.; and the *sūkshma śarīra* of the Hindus, *infra* p. 325 f.

should it be required. Not men alone, but the gods also have bodies of this nature. The spiritual body, *sāhu*, 'germinates' from the *khat*, apparently by virtue of the ceremonies performed and the magical texts recited at the tomb, and ascending into heaven dwells with the gods. According to the view of other authorities, the *sāhu* does not enter upon its existence until after the judgement.

Much importance also was attached to the *ren*, or name; and, as frequently elsewhere, the ability to use the name conferred a degree of magical control over the person or thing named. The *ren* was closely related to the *ka*, but it is not clear in what way the relation was conceived. Its preservation was essential to ensure the wellbeing of its possessor, perhaps even his separate existence. The *khaibit*, or shadow, is often associated with the *ba*; it feeds upon the offerings, and is independent, like the *ka*, being able to wander as it pleases. The *khu* is an obscure 'shining' or insubstantial likeness of the dead man, which has its home with the gods. *Sekhem* is the divine or semi-divine form, under which he himself finds a place in the realms above. Of these last two, however, little definite is known. The after-life in which the deceased thus has part is described in terms which imply a belief in its essential felicity. Every desire is satisfied, and no evil thing has power to hurt or harm those who share the eternal life of Ra.[1]

Neither Egyptian doctrine nor Egyptian belief,

[1] On the doctrine of the parts of the man see also Budge, *op. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 85 ff.; A. Wiedemann, *Ancient Egyptian Doctrine of Immortality*, London, 1895, p. 10 ff.; *Guide to the Egyptian Rooms*, British Museum (1898), p. 9 f.; *HDB*, v. p. 197, and the references there given; F. Petrie, *ERE*, v. p. 241 f.

therefore, can be described as uniform or simple. It is true rather that the creed of the people, and the corresponding practice in ritual and ceremony, presented an exceeding great variety, reflecting the thoughts and characteristics of the many races that had contributed elements to the population of the Nile valley, from the most primitive superstitions to imagery and speculations apparently the most lofty concerning a future life and the nature and dignity of the gods. The predominant place which regard for the life to come occupied in their religious faith is shown by the importance attached in every age to the temples and tombs. It is from the inscriptions and paintings therein contained that our knowledge of Egyptian belief is almost wholly derived. To high and low-born alike the disposal of the body after death in a secure resting-place was a matter of supreme moment. Egypt itself has been well described as a land of tombs, the extent and variety of the burials in which are with difficulty adequately realised. The pyramids themselves were but huge tombs. The most costly temples were monuments on a great scale to the glory of the departed; and historically originated in all probability as mere adjuncts to the sepulchre proper, which the vanity and rivalry of successive generations of kings enlarged and elaborated, until that which at first was subordinate came to occupy the most conspicuous place. The intimate connection between the two, however, was never lost sight of; and until comparatively late times at least every temple, however magnificent, was the vestibule to a tomb or series of tombs, where the royal builder of the temple laid himself down to rest in peace.

Complexity of Egyptian Doctrine: Importance of the Tomb

The parts of the building more immediately associated with the tomb were three in number: (1) an upper chamber or chambers, the walls of which were decorated with pictures and writing descriptive of the life of the deceased; (2) a closed-up passage or corridor, generally facing the north, in which small statues have been found representing the deceased; (3) the excavated vault or pit in the rock, to which the passage led, and in which the mummy was placed.

Theories of the After-Life

The texts in the tombs themselves afford proof of the great variety of Egyptian conception and belief even with regard to the fundamental doctrine of the after-life. The primary and most spiritual theory may be said to be that which identified the deceased with Osiris, and conceived the future as an unending life of bliss in the kingdom of the god. Distinct originally from this was the anthropomorphic conception of the Sun-god in his boat, wherein the righteous souls were received and traversed in safety the regions of the under-world. Attempts were apparently made at a later time to combine or harmonize these two ideas with reference to the future existence; but they are evidently drawn from different strata of religious belief, and presuppose independent habits or modes of thought concerning the life after death. A third theory materialises the soul in the form of a bird, which hovers over the body which it has left. While the universal practice of mummification indicates a desire to preserve the body intact for the further use and habitation of the soul whenever it may be pleased to return and avail itself of its former dwelling-place. It can hardly be doubted that there was implied in this practice some form

of a belief in the migration or transmigration of the soul, combined more or less definitely with the conception that the latter, maintaining its personal identity, had a right to the bodily frame which it had once inhabited, and to which it would or might hereafter be reunited. A harmonistic or syncretistic process sought to reduce these various theories to agreement, and the link between them was found in the conception of the kingdom of Osiris, which, alike as the most spiritual and as holding out the richest hopes of future good, gradually absorbed or superseded the rest, and came to be the universally accepted doctrine of the future, as Osiris himself was universally recognised as the supreme lord of the dead. A unifying tendency therefore was at work here, which made itself felt also in other departments of Egyptian life and thought.

Belief in Immortality

Thus it was on the tomb that the most anxious care and forethought were expended. Egyptian religious beliefs centred in the dwelling-places of the dead, and concerned themselves above all with the after-life of those who had passed away from earth. It is significant that the tombs themselves are called 'eternal dwelling-places'; the souls of the dead are said in so many words to live everlastingly.[1] The former expression however is not to be understood in the sense that provision was

[1] Cp. the inscription on the cover of the inner wooden coffin of King Menkaura, the oldest in the British Museum :—'Hail Osiris, king of the North and South, Menkaura, living for ever, born of heaven, conceived of Nut, heir of Seb, his beloved. . . . Thy mother Nut . . . granteth that thou mayest exist as a god without thy foes, O king of the North and South, Menkaura, living for ever!' *Supra*, p. 92.

made in the grave for the perpetual detention there of the corpse, still less of the spirit that animated it; but rather that the tomb was regarded as in some way haunted by the spirit, for whose future use the body was as far as possible preserved from decay, in order that at the appointed time soul and body might be reunited.[1]

Nor does it appear that the soul, when separated from the body, was conceived of as entering into a state of unending felicity or distress. After the lapse of thousands of years, it might return to take possession of the body from which it had departed; in the interval inhabiting other bodies, as of a bird, a beast, an insect, or a fish.[2] This occupation, however, was apparently always a matter of free choice, not of compulsion or necessity, as in the ordinary doctrine of metempsychosis taught for instance in India. Once emancipated by the death of the body, the soul was competent and at liberty to maintain an entirely independent existence, until the time came for reunion with its own body. And to this period of freedom and independence Egyptian belief set no limit or term.

Worship was offered both in the temples and at the tombs; but in the latter case always to Osiris, or

[1] The oldest mummy preserved is said to be that of Ra-nefer, found at Medum in 1892, now in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons. Ra-nefer was an official of the court of Sneferu, *c.* 3000 B.C.

[2] Cp. Herod. ii. 123.—*πρῶτοι δὲ καὶ τόνδε τὸν λόγον Αἰγύπτιοί εἰσι οἱ εἰπόντες, ὡς ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ ἀθάνατός ἐστι, τοῦ σώματος δὲ καταφθίνοντος ἐς ἄλλο ζῷον αἰεὶ γινόμενον ἐσδύεται· ἐπεὰν δὲ περιέλθῃ πάντα τὰ χερσαῖα καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια καὶ τὰ πετεινά, αὖτις ἐς ἀνθρώπου σῶμα γινόμενον ἐσδύνειν, τὴν περιήλυσιν δὲ αὐτῇ γίνεσθαι ἐν τρισχιλίοισι ἔτεσι.* The information given to Herodotus therefore, if he has rightly interpreted it, did not necessarily contemplate the return of the soul to its own former body.

to some deity associated with him. Animal and vegetable sacrifices were presented, with libations and burning of incense. Moreover upon the exact and generous performance of these ceremonies and sacrifices the wellbeing of the man after death was conceived to depend. If they were neglected, carelessly or improperly performed, suffering was thereby brought upon him. Hence the supreme importance of a son to see to the carrying out of the appropriate funeral rites.[1] Priests were employed to say prayers, and endowments provided, much in the same way as in Europe money is paid for masses for the dead. The tombs therefore were centres of religious worship throughout the land, a worship which in its general features was one and the same. The temples might be and were dedicated to various gods, and in them different although probably similar ceremonial observed; a deity found himself honoured here and neglected there; but the reverence for and cult of Osiris, the lord of the world below, since it was associated with the tombs, was universal. Of the temples themselves again it should be noted that they were not places of common assembly for religious worship as ordinarily understood. But, in close analogy with the Jewish temple at Jerusalem, a distinction was made in most instances at least between the outer court or courts, which were open to all, and inner sanctuaries or shrines, where none but priests were permitted to enter, and where the real worship was carried on by the privileged and initiated few.

Worship

[1] Egyptian belief was of course far from being peculiar or isolated in this respect. The significance of the son's part is emphasized both in primitive practice and in the highly elaborated ceremonial of the greater religions.

Priesthood flourished in Egypt; and the priestly class was numerous and powerful.

The same tendency towards simplification and the co-ordinating of existing deities and beliefs, which showed itself in connection with the ritual of the dead[1] was manifest in the most striking if short-lived religious reform that as far as our knowledge extends was ever effected in the ritual and creed of Egypt. For a brief period monotheism triumphed in the form of the worship of the sun, or the sun's energy, as the one source of light and life. Other gods were put out of sight, their existence ignored or denied, and adoration paid to One alone, whose nature was conceived, if the monuments both written and figured may be trusted, not in any physical or material sense, but spiritually, the visible sun being regarded as the symbol of that supreme beneficent Power to whom all were alike indebted for sustenance and life. The circumstances under which this revolution in religious thought and practice was carried out are in many respects obscure. It is probable that political motives, and perhaps personal prejudices and dislikes, played a considerable part. It is patent also that within so short a time reformed conceptions of a lofty and spiritual nature could hardly have made any deep impression on the convictions of the common people, or have displaced in their regard the popular gods. It appears certain that the priestly class, whose privileges and emoluments were threatened, stood aloof in sullen indifference, or intrigued in active opposition. But of the sincerity and intense conviction of the sovereign who was the prime mover and instigator of the reform,

Monotheistic Reform: Akhenaten

[1] *supra*, p. 116

the ' priest-king ' whose will dominated the whole and for the brief period of his reign imposed his faith outwardly at least upon the State, there can be no doubt.

Amenhetep IV ascended the throne of Egypt at the beginning of the fourteenth century,[1] at a time of considerable political unrest, when the hand of a strong ruler was necessary to direct and control the elements of disorder which for some years had been gathering strength. In these respects his reign was a failure, and he did nothing apparently to combat the external foes of the empire or to restore the confidence of the national life. In character an enthusiast and a visionary, he was probably too unpractical, perhaps also too ease-loving, for the necessities of his position ; absorbed moreover in religious speculation, and of a strongly devotional temperament, he seems to have been as much disinclined as he was constitutionally unable to give that close personal attention to the affairs of the State which the circumstances and the time demanded. The line of his ancestors had held sway at Thebes for a period of two centuries, and amongst their number had been included the greatest rulers and conquerors that Egypt had hitherto known. When Amenhetep IV, however, came to the throne the wide empire was already in process of disintegration. His father apparently had done little to arrest decay ; he himself seems to have passed the few years of his reign altogether in retirement, at the new capital, Akhetaten, the ' horizon of Aten,' now Tell-el-Amarna, which he had founded on the right bank of the Nile, about three hundred miles north of Thebes. On his accession also, in order to avoid the idolatrous associations of the old name and to declare his adherence to the new worship, he adopted the name of Akhenaten (Ikhnaten, Khuenaten), the ' glory of the solar disk,' which was henceforth used exclusively on his monuments. Within a few years of his death the dynasty to which he belonged was overthrown and his capital being abandoned on the return of the court to Thebes was never re-occupied in later times. Two other capital or chief cities were built by the king in honour of Aten, in Lower Egypt and in Nubia respectively. The latter has been identified by J. H. Breasted

[1] He reigned 1383–1365 B.C., according to Petrie ; 1375–1358 B.C., Breasted.

with Gem-Aten and the ruins of the ancient sun-temple of Sesebi, a few miles north of the third Cataract.[1] The site of the former has not hitherto been discovered.

It has been supposed with a considerable measure of probability that Akhenaten owed much of his tendency to religious thought and speculation to his mother Tyi (Thyi, Tiy, Tiyi), who brought with her the purer idealising worship of a northern faith,[2] and proved herself one of the masterful queens of Egyptian history. His wife also, Nefertiti (Nofretete), was the daughter of a Mesopotamian ruler, and that her influence over him was great is attested by her constant presence on the monuments in closest association with the king himself.

In his attempt thus to revolutionise the creed and worship of Egypt, and to build up a pure and spiritual faith, free from the polytheistic tendencies and practices of the prevailing cult, the king necessarily found himself in opposition to the interests and prejudices of the dominant priestly families at Thebes, whose supreme deity, Amen, he

[1] *AJSL*, vol. xxv. (1908–09), p. 51 ff.

[2] There seems to be no definite proof of the northern origin of Queen Tyi; see Breasted, p. 329 f. The inference has been drawn from the representation of her on the monuments with a fair skin, as though of foreign descent, and from the character of the references to her in the text. The true explanation is perhaps that the relationship was not immediate; her father and mother bear names which are purely Egyptian (Petrie, *Hist. of Egypt*, ii. (1896) pp. 182 ff., 202 f.). The tomb of Tyi was discovered at Thebes in the winter season of 1906-1907 with a broken coffin and royal mummy, which was supposed at first to be that of the queen herself. The body however has proved on examination to be that of a young man, and is believed by many to be Akhenaten himself, laid after death in the tomb which he had prepared for his mother. See *EEF Arch. Report*, 1906–07, p. 12; *PSBA*, xxix. (1907) pp. 85 f., 277 ff.; T. M. Davis, G. Maspero, and others, *The Tomb of Queen Tîyi*, London, 1910.

sought to discredit. It would seem that the removal of the court from Thebes was dictated in part by the desire to escape from the hostile and powerful religious influences which centred in the ancient capital city of Amen. Everywhere the name of the god was erased from the monuments, and no idolatrous emblems or figures were allowed to find place there. In all the sculptures the king and queen are uniformly represented in the act of sacrifice, receiving life and health through the vivifying solar rays, which stream down to them from the orb of Aten in long lines that end in hands, which give support to the royal pair or hold to their nostrils the *ankh*, the symbol of life.[1] For a similar reason the name Amenhetep, which he had received from his predecessors, was distasteful because of its association with Amen, and was discarded for the new name, which was henceforth always employed in public documents and on the monuments. In the numerous inscriptions of Akhenaten's reign the earlier name only once occurs. And not the most distant recognition was given to any of the deities of Thebes, nor were any of them mentioned or even referred to, except only Maat, the goddess of justice and truth; and the references to Maat are couched in such terms as to make it evident that the thought was not that of an individual or personal god, but rather an abstract principle or mental conception, not in any way materialised or fashioned as a concrete personality.

Thus the revolution in religious thought was complete. The creed which the king adopted and sought to impose upon his country was a monotheistic and spiritual worship, free from the taint of idolatry; in which a real attempt

Aten

[1] Petrie, *Hist. of Egypt*, ii. p. 205 ff.; Breasted, p. 363 ff.

appears to have been made to penetrate beneath the *phenomena*, the forms and appearances, to the underlying spiritual meaning and truth. The sun-god himself was not conceived in a personal or materialistic sense. Aten was distinct from the visible and physical orb in the heavens. The latter was only the symbol of the life and reality which, unchanging and eternal, lay as it were in reserve behind, and vivified the whole universe. Life and truth were the great attributes of the spiritual Aten, the former of which he communicated to his worshippers in response to their prayer. It is evident, moreover, that while the Aten was conceived as possessed of all power, able to defend and to give life, a no less real and permanent characteristic was beneficence. His power was exerted to bless, and those who sought his favour might ask in the confident expectation of receiving good; prayers addressed to him for support and relief were not spoken in vain. The whole environment and spirit of the king and queen, as revealed on the monuments and in the inscriptions, give an impression of simplicity and wholehearted sincerity, and of a life which on the religious side was governed by high conceptions and motives. Of the forms or details however of the worship nothing is known.

Akhenaten apparently had no sons. He was succeeded on the throne in succession by two sons-in-law; under the second of whom, Tutankhaten or Tutankhamen, the court returned to Thebes, the ancient worship of Amen was revived, and the name of the god restored on the monuments from which it had been erased. His successor, Ay or Eye, had been an official of the court at Tell-el-Amarna, but was himself perhaps not of royal descent, inheriting the throne in his wife's right. He built for himself a noble tomb at Tell-el-Amarna; but the overthrow of the Aten faith was complete, and with, or soon after the king's death the dynasty came to

a close. Thus the capital city which had been adorned with so much labour was deserted and forgotten within a few years of the death of its founder, and with it perished the reformation of religious thought and worship which had been inaugurated with so much zeal and hope. In recent years the ruined site and city of Tell-el-Amarna has become known especially from the collection of inscribed tablets discovered there towards the end of the nineteenth century, containing the correspondence of the rulers of Northern Syria and Mesopotamia and the governors of Palestinian cities with the Egyptian kings during the latter part of the fifteenth and the earlier part of the fourteenth centuries B.C.[1]

Engraved on the walls of the great tomb chapel of Eye at Tell-el-Amarna was found a hymn or psalm in praise of Aten which breathes a lofty spirit of piety and devotion, as free from any suggestion of idolatry as the Hebrew psalms with which it has often been compared. If not the composition of the king Akhenaten himself, it marks the character of the faith by which he was inspired, and may very possibly owe its form as well as its spirit to royal authorship.[2]

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven,
O living Aten, beginning of life!
When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty.

. . . . . .

[1] The city itself, and the discovery and contents of the tablets have frequently been described and discussed Around the latter a very large literature has grown up. See *e.g.* Flind. Petrie, *Tell-el-Amarna*, London, 1894, and *Hist.* ii p. 259 ff.; Memoirs of the EEF Arch. Survey, *Rock Tombs of el-Amarna*, by N. de G. Davies, 1902–1908; H. R. Hall, in *Hand Book for Egypt and the Sudan*[11], p. 331 ff.; C. Bezold, *Tell-el-Amarna Tablets in the British Museum*, London, 1892; etc.

[2] Flind. Petrie, ii. p. 214 ff.; Breasted, p. 371 ff. The rendering is that of Dr. Breasted. The entire hymn is of very considerable length.

Bright is the earth,
When thou risest in the horizon,
When thou shinest as Aten by day.
The darkness is banished,
When thou sendest forth thy rays.
The two lands (Egypt) are in daily festivity,
Awake and standing upon their feet,
For thou hast raised them up.
Their limbs bathed they take their clothing;
Their arms uplifted in adoration to thy dawning.
Then in all the world, they do their work.

All cattle rest upon their herbage,
All trees and plants flourish,
The birds flutter in their marshes,
Their wings uplifted in adoration to thee.
All the sheep dance upon their feet,
All winged things fly,
They live when thou hast shone upon them.

. . . . . .

Thou art he who createst the man-child in woman,
Who makest seed in man,
Who givest life to the son in the body of his mother,
Who soothest him that he may not weep,
A nurse (even) in the womb.
Who giveth breath to animate every one that he maketh.
When he cometh forth from the body,
. . . on the day of his birth,
Thou openest his mouth in speech,
Thou suppliest his necessities.

. . . . . .

How manifold are thy works!
They are hidden from before us,
O thou sole god, whose powers no other possesseth!
Thou didst create the earth according to thy desire,
While thou wast alone:
Men, all cattle large and small,
All that are upon the earth,
That go about upon their feet;
All that are on high,
That fly with their wings.

The countries of Syria and Nubia,
The land of Egypt;
Thou settest every man in his place,
Thou suppliest their necessities.
Every one has his possessions,
And his days are reckoned.
Their tongues are diverse in speech,
Their forms likewise and their skins,
For thou divider hast divided the peoples.

. . . . . .

Thou art in my heart,
There is no other that knoweth thee,
Save thy son Iknaton.[1]
Thou hast made him wise in thy designs
And in thy might.
The world is in thy hand,
Even as thou hast made them.
When thou hast risen they live;
When thou settest they die.

. . . . . .

By thee man liveth,
And their eyes look upon thy beauty,
Until thou settest.
All labour is laid aside,
When thou settest in the west;
When thou risest they are made to grow.

. . . . . .

Thou hast raised them up for thy son,
Who came forth from thy limbs,
The king, living in truth,
The lord of the Two Lands, Nefer-khepru-Re,[2]
The son of Re,[3] living in truth, lord of diadems,
Ikhnaton,[1] whose life is long;
(And for) the great royal wife, his beloved,
Mistress of the two Lands, Nefernefruaton,
Living and flourishing for ever and ever.

[1] Akhenaten.

[2] *i.e.* Akhenaten.

[3] Ra.

The creed and manner of worship which Akhenaten thus professed and sought to propagate were in all probability too philosophical and abstract to win the attention or devotion of the common people. Their innate conservatism co-operated with the prejudices and attachment to material interests of the priestly families at Thebes to resist innovation. What might have happened if the life of the king had been prolonged it is impossible to say. The religious forms and faith which had grown up during the centuries and fitted themselves into their environment were too firmly rooted to be overthrown in a generation. And his successors were perhaps as indifferent as they were incapable. The old gods resumed their interrupted sway, and the reformation proved itself as short-lived as it was remarkable for spiritual fervour and insight. The site of the capital remained desolate and deserted for fifteen hundred years, until the Romans came and established a camp and military settlement there in close proximity to the ruins of Akhenaten's ancient city. The desolation of the site would seem to be symbolical of the fruitlessness and barrenness of a religious reform, however noble and true its aspirations may be, which is exotic and imposed by authority from without, but is out of touch with the feelings and thought of the people, and makes no sympathetic appeal to their felt needs.[1]

Failure of Reform

How far therefore these higher aspirations and more abstract speculations were shared by the people of Egypt in general it is impossible to

[1] The origin of the modern name of the site, Tell-el-Amarna, is uncertain, and the name itself seems not to be in current use by the native inhabitants of the district.

determine. Probably to a degree comparatively slight, if not altogether inappreciable. It is evident moreover that by the side of the official cult of the dead, and the faith and worship that gathered round the tomb, there existed superstitious beliefs of quite another kind, which affected rather the living. The precise extent and influence of these it is not easy to measure. In the life of the ordinary Egyptian, however, omens and charms of all sorts certainly played a large part. His magicians and astrologers determined for him lucky and unlucky days. At given times he must not go forth from his house, lest he expose himself to hurtful influences. If unfortunate enough to be born on a certain day, an early or violent death will be sure to overtake him. He provided himself also with talismans, to defeat the power of the evil eye; with potent spells to avert the consequences of the malice of demons; with amulets to wear on his body as preservatives from harm or sickness. In strange contrast to the higher beliefs and teaching which the scenes and inscriptions in the tombs attest, in these respects and under other circumstances the Egyptian exhibits himself as the victim of a mass of superstitions, defending his life by incantations from imaginary perils, and putting his trust in a childish magic, the nearest parallel to which will perhaps be found among the negroes of Central or Western Africa. He believes in the existence and potency of ghosts, and of evil spirits who take possession of and otherwise annoy the living; and puts confidence in dreams as channels of communication with the unseen world. Further he seems to have formed a conception of Destiny or Fate as a controlling force, inexorable and

Inferior Elements of Religious Belief

supreme, not altogether dissimilar to that of the Greeks.

It is difficult to determine with confidence what measure of influence these opinions and beliefs had upon the moral practice and life of the men of ancient Egypt. In their practice as in their creed there were apparent inconsistencies and contradictions, which are true to human nature everywhere; a lofty code of morality on the one hand, set off on the other by dark habits of superstition and cruelty. These last, however, with the popular beliefs and conclusions which they imply, are by no means peculiar to the valley of the Nile. They are the common inheritance, and determine the practice to a greater or less extent of all peoples in their relations with the other world. Even nations that have attained a comparatively high degree of civilisation do not at once shake themselves free from the bonds of a superstitious credulity; and, as students of folk-lore well know, these fancies and convictions are by no means extinct in European countries at the present day. That which is peculiar to Egypt, her unique possession indeed among ancient peoples with the exception of those which come within the circle of Jewish influence, is the widely-extended, practically universal belief in the immortality of the soul,—in a future life the conditions of which are determined, at least theoretically, by righteous or unrighteous behaviour in this. If judgement is to be passed upon the nation's character and thought in the light of their literature alone, or of that portion of it which is concerned with this particular doctrine and with man's duty as regards the life after death,—and this subject it must be remembered occupies by far the

Morality

largest and most imposing part of that literature, —then to the Egyptian must be assigned a very high place, if not the highest, in the number of those who have taught and practised a lofty morality.[1] And although it is impossible to ignore those other features of a complex religious motive and life which they share with peoples lower in the scale of civilisation ; although it seems evident that with them also belief and practice declined from their early simplicity ; nevertheless the judgement on the whole will assuredly be given in their favour, and will justify a people who more than most others sought to know and to walk in the light of the truth.

[1] Compare the *Precepts of Ptah-Hotep*, 'the most ancient book in the world,' translated by Philippe Virey, in *Records of the Past*, new series, vol. iii. ; *supra*, p. 92.

CHAPTER III

BABYLONIA AND ASSYRIA

Complex Character of Religion

To disentangle from the abundant literary remains of the Mesopotamian lands, historical mythological and religious, the essential elements of their faith and practice, and to present them in a succinct form which shall adequately reflect the general thought and belief of the people, is perhaps more difficult than was found to be the case even in Egypt. The mass of detailed information that is in our hands is very great. Its co-ordination, however, presents considerable difficulties, and a statement in broad and general terms of the outlines of religious belief, as they appear to shape themselves from a consideration of the character and functions of the deities, the attitude and language of the worshippers, is perhaps all that is possible. Every year, moreover, in fresh discoveries and elucidations, bears witness to a progressive knowledge, which almost at any time may necessitate modifications of generally accepted views, or throw fresh light upon obscurities that had found before no sufficient or satisfying interpretation. Thus with regard to the religion of Babylon also, there is much upon which the final word has not yet been spoken; its complexity, its composite and changing character, is apparent everywhere. Most of the authoritative books deal rather with one or more aspects of the

subject than attempt to present a connected survey of the whole. It is only in general terms, therefore, that the nature of the Babylonian and Assyrian faith can be regarded as determined; and the details, as far as they are here presented, must be regarded as material for a fuller and final statement, for which the time is not yet ripe.[1]

The Land and its History

In the country that lies between the two rivers Euphrates and Tigris, the land of Mesopotamia, there flourished empires and a civilisation, the records of which carry us back to as far distant a time as do those of Egypt herself. The earliest inscribed tablets that have been brought to light from the soil of Babylonia are interpreted by scholars as referring to events and reigns that occurred during the fourth millennium before Christ; and the reliable history of Egyptian kings begins at or about the same period. These limits may indeed appear sufficiently wide; and the advantage in point of antiquity is perhaps on the side of Egypt, in that, as far as our present knowledge goes, the fully-grown civilisation with which she appears on the scene presupposes a longer period of development than is necessarily implied in the case of Babylon.[2] The conditions also

[1] Cp. to the same effect H. Zimmern, in *ERE*, ii. p. 309.

[2] It is not easy to avoid the appearance of dogmatism in referring to matters of ancient chronology. Calculations of date which are carried back into the millenniums before the Christian era are tentative, and liable to errors of uncertain dimensions; it is hardly probable that the more remote periods will ever submit themselves to accurate and precise chronological statement. Recent discoveries do not lend much aid to a determination of the relation or of the relative age of the Babylonian and Egyptian civilisations. In all probability they were worked out independently, with beginnings in a very distant past.

of the two countries, and therefore the initial environment of their civilisation, were in important respects similar. For as Egypt was the gift of the Nile, so was Mesopotamia the gift of her two rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris. The latter country, however, throughout the early centuries had freer access to and communication with the surrounding peoples than was possible to the inhabitants of the Nile valley.

The Mesopotamian rivers take their rise in the mountains of Armenia. The Tigris, the eastern and shorter river, after rising within a few miles of the sister stream, makes a great bend east and south-east. The Euphrates, with a source further to the north and a longer course, flows at first westwards, and then south, before turning south-east. At Baghdad the streams approach within thirty or forty miles of one another, only to separate again, leaving between them a wide

There was however a common factor, which at some time in the course of their history entered into both; and some scholars are disposed to find this common factor in the influence and civilisation of Southern Arabia. Cp. Amiaud, on the tablets of Telloh, in *Records of the Past*, new series, vol. i. p. 42 ff.; Hilprecht, *Recent Research in Bible Lands*, p. 60 f. :—'Through the abundance of the recovered texts of the earliest Semitic rulers . . . our conception of the power and extent of the Semitic race of about 3800 B.C. had to undergo a radical transformation'; *ib.*, p. 67 f.: 'We shall not go astray, therefore, if we place the approximate age of the earliest of these kings, Urukagina, on the threshold of the fifth and fourth millenniums before Christ, or, in round numbers, 4000 B.C.' L. W. King, *History of Sumer and Akkad*, i., 1910, dates Ur-Ninā of Lagash *c.* 3000 B.C., and Urukagina two hundred years later. The names of earlier rulers are known. There is a distinct tendency on the part of recent writers towards a reduction of the excessively early dates ascribed to ancient kings. Cp. also Hilprecht, *Explorations in Bible Lands during the Nineteenth Century*, *passim*, and on Ur-Ninā, p. 240 f.

level plain, the length of which from north-west by west to south-east by east is about two hundred and fifty miles, with an average breadth of seventy-five or eighty. The two rivers finally unite at Kurnah, in latitude 31° N., longitude 47° 30′ E., to form the Shatt-el-Arab; and pursue their course together for some hundred miles farther, through a flat swampy plain, into the head of the Persian Gulf. The earlier part of the course of both rivers is, therefore, through a mountainous country, which must in prehistoric times have been largely volcanic. Southward, however, the hills descend gradually to the great plain of Mesopotamia, broad and once populous and fertile, which may be considered to commence at about the 34th or 35th degree north latitude. There is however no clearly-defined boundary line between lowland and upland.

The whole of this level country is formed by the sediment which the rivers have brought down from the mountains of Armenia, gradually silting up the Persian Gulf, and pushing back its head farther and farther south; and the richness of the land thus reclaimed from the sea is attested by the numerous remains of great and populous cities, the footprints of mighty empires, which there held successive sway. Much of the country, therefore, that is now settled and inhabited must even in early historic times have been beneath the surface of the water; while in the unrecorded ages before the beginning of history or tradition the Persian Gulf extended to the foot of the Armenian hills. Attempts have been made to estimate the time required for the deposition of the existing land, and thereby to recognise a *terminus a quo* for the possible settlement of tribes and peoples in the Euphrates valley. It is calculated that at the

present time the land is encroaching southwards at the rate of a mile in about seventy years.[1] But in all probability the rate of advance was considerably faster in the centuries before our era, when the coastline was nearer to the hills, and the sediment had not in consequence so far to travel. No reliable inference can be drawn from the progress now going on to the state of the country at any given date in primitive times.

Earliest Inhabitants

The question who were the earliest inhabitants of this land of Babylonia is one to which as yet no satisfactory answer has been given. Nor is it in the least likely that we shall ever be able fully to trace the migrations, and disentangle the races that found a common meeting-ground on the plains of the Euphrates. The ordinary view postulates a primitive population of wandering or half-settled tribes, variously termed Accadian or Turanian, probably of Mongolian origin, loosely connected together and speaking an agglutinative language, living somewhat after the manner of the Kurds of to-day but in a higher state of civilisation. According to some authorities these tribes were themselves immigrants, who intermingled with and partially displaced a still earlier Semitic stock, from whom they borrowed in part at least their arts and their language. The Mongoloid character, however, of the primitive inhabitants of at least the southern part of the Mesopotamian plain can hardly be considered any longer as doubtful. The testimony of the early sculptures and inscriptions is conclusive. Whether they were themselves *autochthones*, or superseded and dispossessed a yet more primitive and loosely organised people,

[1] Cp. Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*,[2] p. 549 and note 1.

is a problem that admits of no definite solution. Analogy would suggest that in all probability in the prehistoric age such interchange or transference of population took place more than once. The question however is of no practical importance, either for religion or for politics. The history of the Babylonian countries begins with the peoples of fairly homogeneous character and descent, known in the north as Akkadians, and in the south by the more familiar name of Sumerian.[1]

Coming of the Semites

Upon and amongst these tribes of uncertain origin came the Semites, ultimately in all probability from Southern Arabia, but whether directly thence into the plains of Mesopotamia, or after a more or less prolonged sojourn in the countries north-east and east of the Persian Gulf, is uncertain. The immigrants established themselves in the land of Shinar, in the south of Mesopotamia, between the two rivers, where the most important early

[1] See especially L. W. King, *Early History of Sumer and Akkad*, London, 1910, the most serviceable and competent account in English of the early history of the Mesopotamian peoples. The curious controversy as to the existence of an Akkadian or Sumerian language and race, maintained by such scholars as F. Delitzsch and Halévy, appears to have been laid entirely to rest. There can be no doubt with regard to the main facts above set forth. Delitzsch expresses his judgement in his *Assyrian Grammar*, § 25, Eng. ed. (1889), and has never, so far as I know, retracted the view:—'The Semitic Babylonians will be found entirely justified when they ascribed the invention of the art of writing to their god Nebo, and that besides the Cossæans, they never anywhere make the slightest mention of a third, a Sumero-Accadian people, will in the long run be explained by the fact that such a people was never in existence.' Cp. also G. Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*[2] (1896), p. 550, note 5; M. Jastrow, in *AJSL* xxii. (1905-06), p. 89 ff.; *ib.* xxiii. p. 331 ff; King and Hall, *Recent Excavations in Western Asia*, p. 196 ff.

settlements were Erech or Uruk (Warka), Nippur, Eridu, and Uru (Ur of the Chaldees). Other chief cities whose foundation or origin was of great antiquity were Larsa, Lagash, Babylon itself, Borsippa, Akkad, and many others. Names of early rulers, who in some instances at least were apparently priest-kings, are known, whose reigns can hardly be dated later than the middle or end of the fourth millennium B.C.

These early Babylonian kingdoms appear to have been subject to pressure and incursions from more than one side: from the Chaldaeans, on the one hand, from out of their ancient and famous capital city of Ur, now Mugheir, the origin of which is wholly unknown, and even the identification of its site disputed; from the Elamite tribes from the east; and perhaps also from tribes of Hittite origin from the north. The Elamites seem to have overrun the entire country, and about two thousand years B.C. to have gained a position at Babylon itself, overthrowing the native kings, and setting up there Elamite or Kassite dynasties.[1] Later the northern part of the country increased in strength, and about the year 1700 B.C. became an independent kingdom under the name of Assyria, a name derived from its chief town or god Ashur. Babylon was conquered and made tributary by Tukulti-Adar (Ninib) I, *c.* 1275 B.C. But the real founder of the greatness of Assyria, and of what is known as the first Assyrian empire, was Tiglath-Pileser I, a century and a half later. His successful wars carried him northwards into the mountains of Armenia, as far as Lake Van,

History

[1] Cp. especially for the fullest historical detail L. W. King, *Chronicles concerning early Babylonian Kings*, 2 vols., London, 1907, and *History of Sumer and Akkad, ut supra.*

as well as southwards into Babylonia, and westwards as is generally supposed to Phoenicia and the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. After his death there was a brief decline in the Assyrian power. But the glory of the empire was reasserted by Ashur-nasir-pal and by his son Shalmaneser II, 885–825 B.C., in whose reign Assyria and Israel first came into contact. The second Assyrian empire was founded by Tiglath-Pileser III, or Pul, a usurper, 745–727 B.C. (פּוּל, 2 Kings xv. 19); under whose successors, Shalmaneser IV, Sargon,—another usurper,—Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Assur-bani-pal, 668–626 B.C., the power of Assyria reached its greatest height. Nineveh was destroyed 606 B.C. by the combined forces of the Medes and Babylonians; thus making way for the new Babylonian empire established by Nabopolassar, which endured until 539 B.C., when Babylon itself was taken by Cyrus and passed under the rule of the Persians, who in their turn were succeeded by the Greeks under Alexander the Great.

Chronology

The combined investigations of many scholars during the last few years have thrown much light on the difficult problems of early Mesopotamian history and development, and the relationship of the different races who found a home in the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.[1] The difficulties involved, both ethnological and historical, are great, and many questions with regard to the

[1] The most authoritative and recent discussions will be found in the volumes of Mr. L. W. King, of the British Museum, to which reference has already been made. Cp. H. V. Hilprecht, *Explorations in Bible Lands during the Nineteenth Century*, Edinb., 1903, ch. i.; A. H. Sayce, *Babylonians and Assyrians*, 1900, and *Archaeology of the Cuneiform Inscriptions*, London, 1907; etc.

earlier periods especially and the succession of peoples and rulers can never be answered with certainty. In particular the complexity of the religious problems involved, and the variety of belief and practice have become more evident with increasing knowledge. No more than in Egypt has a single theory or principle been found adequate to explain the variety of usage and creed, which declared itself in the written records, and apparently underlay the religious observance of king priest and people. What has been termed however the historical instinct was present among the Babylonians, and more especially perhaps among the Assyrians, to an extent to which it never existed, or at least never found expression, among the races of the Nile valley. From the beginning of the ninth century before Christ to the middle of the seventh, there has been preserved in the so-called *Assyrian Eponym Canon* a complete system of chronology, in which the chief events are dated with precision from year to year. It is not always easy, however, to relate the statements of the Canon to our modern reckoning; nor is much assistance to be gained from it in determining the chronology of the preceding centuries. As was the case with the consuls at Rome, an officer was appointed annually, who gave his name to the term during which he held office. And it was usual for the king himself to become the eponym, or in Assyrian *limmu*, in the first or second year of his reign. Lists of these eponyms were drawn up and preserved, and have come down to us, although in an incomplete form. It is possible, however, to compile an unbroken table of the chronology within the limits indicated,—years which include the most important part of Assyrian history. There is evidence also that at

one time similar lists were in existence, reaching back to a much greater antiquity.[1] Between the dates and reigns of the Assyrian kings thus determined, and the dates given in the Hebrew records of the Old Testament, considerable discrepancies exist,—discrepancies in which it is usual to give the preference to the Assyrian records on account of their certainly contemporary character. The writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles, on the other hand, followed a different system of chronology from that of the Assyrian tables, and it is at least open to question whether the reliability of the latter, in spite of their apparent precision, is as absolute as has been assumed. Almost the only date of importance in which the two systems agree is that of the year of the fall of Samaria, which took place in 722 B.C. Most scholars recognise the necessity of revising the succession and dates of events and reigns given in the Old Testament for the kings of Israel and Judah in the light of Assyrian discovery and research.

Cuneiform Records

The story of the recovery and interpretation of these records is a historical and literary romance to which a parallel is scarcely to be found.[2] At the beginning of the nineteenth century nothing was known of the Babylonian and Assyrian empires and peoples beyond what was recorded

[1] See *Records of the Past*, new series, vol. i. p. 10 ff.; E. Schrader, *Cun. Inscr. and the Old Testament*, English trans., 1888, vol. ii. p. 161 ff.; George Smith, *Assyrian Eponym Canon*, London, n.d. (1875); and the works above cited.

[2] The Egyptian language cannot be said to have ever been completely lost, and the recovery of the Hittite is as yet unaccomplished. Moreover, when the way has once been pointed out, to apply methods and principles which have been proved successful is a very different task from that of a pioneer.

in the brief notices of the Old Testament and of Greek classical writers. From the apparently barren and desolate sites, however, of their own lands has been recovered an ancient literature, of an extent far greater than that contained in the entire volume of extant Hebrew writings, the larger part of which is still unpublished; but the key to its interpretation has been supplied by the insight and unwearied labours of a few scholars. This literature is historical, religious, and scientific; and is found inscribed on tablets of clay in the great libraries that have been dug up from the mounds and ruined cities of Mesopotamia. In this labour of exploration and decipherment, many Englishmen, as Sir H. Rawlinson, Sir A. H. Layard, George Smith, and others now living, have borne an honourable and effective part. But the work is still comparatively incomplete. Fifty years hence the history, political social and religious, of Babylonia and Assyria will be written with a fullness and certainty of detail that is as yet unattainable.

The character inscribed on the tablets and monuments of Mesopotamia is wholly unlike that found in any other part of the world. It consists of a wedge-like stroke, which may be described as a narrow elongated triangle, impressed upon clay with a mallet or style. Various combinations of these wedges, upright horizontal or slanting, are associated to form each character; which then stands, not for a single letter, but for a syllable or syllables. A given character, moreover, may not only be made to serve for more syllables than one, but it may frequently be employed also as an ideogram,—intended therefore to convey some idea and to represent some word, to the true

pronunciation of which its form, as presented to the eye, affords no clue.[1] The writing therefore is syllabic and ideographic, not alphabetic. And there has been given to it the name of arrow-headed, cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, from the character employed.

Who were the inventors of this extremely cumbersome and inconvenient mode of writing it is impossible to say; and the question has long been debated between opposite schools of experts. It would seem probable that the character was at first linear, and that the wedge-shape was developed with the adoption of clay as a writing material. If this conclusion is justified, then it would follow that the character and mode of writing were introduced into and not indigenous to the Euphrates valley. In a few of the ideograms also it is still possible to trace a resemblance to the object denoted by the sign; showing that the characters were originally in part at least hieroglyphic. Most scholars assign their origin to an early Turanian race, the so-called Sumerians, from whom the later Semites borrowed the signs, adapting them to the forms and necessities of their own language. In the judgement of others, but less probably, a Semitic people or peoples were themselves the inventors for their own purposes of the cuneiform script. If that be so, they certainly invented a peculiarly difficult and unsuitable mode of writing. These

[1] Compare the intrusion of Semitic words into the Pahlavi, written and spelt according to Semitic rules, but in practice receiving the pronunciation of their Persian equivalents. See M. Haug, *Essay on the Pahlavi Language*, Stuttgart, 1870; West, *SBE*, vol. v. p. xi. ff. The same explanation is probably to be given of the apparent different values of one and the same sign in Assyrian (Haug, *l.c.*, p. 121 f.).

wedge-shaped signs, once established, were employed for several languages, differing widely in their nature both as to grammar and vocabulary; of which the most important and interesting, both historically and on account of their intimate connection with Hebrew, are the Babylonian and Assyrian, the closely-related languages of the great empires of Mesopotamia. Between them differences of little more than dialect and age exist; and they are more nearly akin to Hebrew, and therefore have more effectively elucidated its origin and structure and especially its vocabulary, than any other language that is known.

The literary works that have been recovered from the ruined temples and palaces of Babylonia, and which are all thus written on imperishable clay, may be conveniently described as belonging to three classes, historical scientific and religious; but of none of these are the limits capable of rigorous definition. Legend and fable intrude into the sphere of genuine history; and it is often difficult to determine not only the value of an ancient tradition, but the degree to which a contemporary chronicler may be relied upon to adhere to the truth. The scientific literature again is dominated to a large extent by empiricism and magic. The religious documents give expression to thought and belief upon all that has to do with man's relations to and worship of supernatural powers. These three classes are not separated by any hard and fast lines; so that it is often impossible to define, for instance, where science ends and sorcery begins; or to distinguish between the latter and a true instinct of religion, working on a low scale.

Literature

In religious as well as in national character the

two peoples appear to have been essentially distinct.

Contrast between Babylonian and Assyrian

The Babylonians were in general of a pacific and reverent nature, introspective and devoting their time and energy to literary pursuits and the cultivation of science and art. The interest of kings and people alike was to a considerable extent centred on religious themes, and their industry and devotion served religious ends. The Assyrians, on the other hand, until a comparatively late period of their empire, did not busy themselves with the making of books. They were content to borrow from their neighbours, without apparently assimilating the great mass of written knowledge with which they stored their libraries. To them belonged a nature and character rougher and more warlike; and they have been often and aptly termed the Romans of Asia, campaigning far and wide, and building up by force a great empire in which the arts of peace held only a secondary place. The few Assyrian compositions with any claim to real originality which have been preserved are bare chronological and historical annals; nor is it until we come to the reign of Assur-bani-pal, 668–626 B.C., that we find any apparent interest in or application to literature. The immense development that took place in every direction under this Assyrian king was not less manifest in literary zeal and production than in more active pursuits. But even then it was chiefly imitative and derived, the work of copyists rather than of men of letters.

At Babylon and with the Babylonian nation it was entirely otherwise. There, from the earliest period with which we are acquainted, literature and science were cultivated and pressed into

the service of religion and daily life. But with them also the question presents itself whether these arts and acquirements were entirely or in largest part of native growth, or whether they were imported from without. The Assyrians unquestionably borrowed and adapted, while themselves producing little. It is possible that the men of Babylon, their predecessors and teachers, were themselves indebted in their turn to a foreign race for most of what they knew. Nor is it easy to determine whether or to what extent their great literature was really indigenous, the product of the Semitic mind working in and by itself, or whether, with much beside, it was derived from an earlier Sumerian civilisation. The question is still *sub judice*, and for the purposes of the study of Comparative Religion may be put on one side. If the culture and literary possessions of the Babylonians were wholly or to a great extent of foreign origin, they were at least received before the dawn of authentic and decipherable history; and to disentangle the native threads from the primitive web into which they have been woven is a task for which no sufficient information is available. For all practical purposes it will suffice to regard their religion as though in fact of simple and unmixed origin.

Historical Documents

One of the most interesting, if not the earliest document illustrative of Babylonian mythology and belief is the so-called Epic of the Creation,[1] an account of the creation of the universe, which bears, as is well known, a remarkable resemblance to the history given in the first

[1] See L. W. King, *Seven Tablets of Creation*, London, 1902; M. Jastrow, in *HDB*, vol. v. p. 567 ff., with references; H. Zimmern, in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 314; A. Jeremias, *Das A. T. im*

chapter of Genesis. The poem, which has come down to us in three forms or versions, all of them fragmentary, consisted originally in all probability of seven tablets or books, of some of which the whole, and of others large parts are now missing. The principal tablets were found in the ruins of the royal library of Assur-bani-pal at Nineveh. And although in their present form the legends are judged to be little, if at all, earlier than his time, they embody elements of a much greater age. The second version is contained in two tablets brought from the same site, and differs considerably in detail and arrangement. The scribe of these tablets records that he copied from older documents belonging to Cutha in Babylonia; to this account, therefore, the name Cuthaean or Babylonian has sometimes been applied. Fragments of a third, a bilingual narrative, have been discovered at Sippara; and are believed to be older than the other two.

The first tablet is introductory, describing the condition of the universe when only *Tiāmat* or Chaos (Heb. תְּהוֹם, 'deep,' Gen. i. 2) existed; and when out of chaos were produced the primeval gods of the sky and the ocean. The second tablet has not been recovered. The third and fourth give an account of the great war waged between the powers of light and of darkness, represented by the gods of heaven and their allies on the one hand, and on the other by Tiāmat with her monstrous offspring. The champion of the gods is

Lichte des Alten Orient, 1906, p. 132 ff.; R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, Oxford, n.d. (1912), p. 3 ff.; etc. New fragments which apparently belong to the same series occasionally come to light, and there seems no reason why the whole should not eventually be recovered. Cp. also S. Langdon in *PSBA*, xxxii. (1910), pp. 115 ff., 159 ff.; T. G. Pinches, *ib.*, xxx., (1908), pp. 53 ff., 77 ff.; *al.*

Marduk (Merodach). And the conflict ends in the overthrow and the destruction of Tiāmat, the establishment of light and order in the universe, and the extension of the heavens. In the fifth tablet the heavenly bodies are made, the sun, moon, stars, and the signs of the zodiac. The sixth tablet is missing; while the seventh tells of the creation of beasts, cattle, and creeping things.[1]

At that time the heaven above had not yet announced,
or the earth beneath recorded a name;
the unopened deep was their generator,
Mummu-Tiamat (the chaos of the sea) was the mother of them all.
Their waters were embosomed as one, and
the corn-field was unharvested, the pasture was ungrown.
At that time the gods had not appeared, any of them;
by no name were they recorded, no destiny (had they fixed).
Then the (great) gods were created,
Lakhmu and Lakhamu issued forth (the first),
until they grew up (when)
Ansar and Kisar were created.
Long were the days, extended (was the time, until)
the gods Anu (Bel and Ea were born).
Ansar and Kisar (gave them birth).

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

'O Merodach, thou art he who avengest us;
we give thee the sovereignty, (we) the hosts of all the universe,
Thou possessest (it), and in the assembly (of the gods) mayest thou exalt thy word!
Never may thy weapons be broken; may thine enemies tremble!
O lord, be gracious to the soul of him who putteth his trust in thee,
and destroy the soul of the god who has hold of evil.'

. . . . . .

[1] *Records of the Past*, new series, vol. i. pp. 122 ff., 147 ff.; vol. vi. p. 107 ff.; George Smith, *Chaldaean Account of Genesis*, London, 1876; Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*[3], London, 1891, ch. vi.; Rogers, *loc. cit.*

They (the gods) rejoiced, they approached Merodach the king.
They bestowed upon him the sceptre, throne, and reign ;
they gave him a weapon unsurpassed, consuming the hostile.
' Go ' (they said) ' and cut off the life of Tiamat ;
let the winds carry her blood to secret places.'

. . . . . .

' (Against) the gods my fathers thou hast directed thy hostility.
Thou harnesser of thy companions, may thy weapons reach their bodies !
Stand up, and I and thou wilt fight together.'
When Tiamat heard this,
she uttered her former spells, she repeated her command.
Tiamat also cried out vehemently with a loud voice.
From its roots she strengthened (her) seat completely.
She recites an incantation, she casts a spell,
and the gods of battle demand for themselves their arms.
Then Tiamat attacked Merodach the chief prophet of the gods ;
in combat they joined ; they met in battle ;
and the lord outspread his snare (and) enclosed her.

. . . . . .

He bound her, and ended her life.
He threw down her corpse ; he stood upon it.
When Tiamat who marched before (them) was conquered,
he dispersed her forces, her host was overthrown,
and the gods her allies who marched beside her
trembled (and) feared (and) turned their backs.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

He prepared the twin mansions of the great gods.
He fixed the stars, even the twin-stars, to correspond with them.
He ordained the year, appointing the signs of the zodiac over (it).
For each of the twelve months he fixed three stars,
from the day when the year issues forth to its close.
He founded the mansion of the (Sun-god), the god of the ferry-boat, that they might know their bonds,
that they might not err, that they might not go astray in any way.

. . . . . .

He illuminated the Moon-god, that he might be porter of the night,
and ordained for him the ending of the night that the day may be known,
(saying), 'Month by month, without break, keep watch in thy disk.
At the beginning of the month light up the night,
announcing thy horns that the heaven may know.'

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

At that time the gods in their assembly created (the beasts).
They made perfect the mighty (monsters).
They caused the living creatures to come forth,
the cattle of the field (the wild beasts) of the field, and the creeping things.
(They fixed their habitations) for the living creatures (of the field).
They distributed (in their dwelling-places) the cattle and creeping things of the city.
(They made strong) the multitude of creeping things, all the off-spring (of the earth).

A larger epic poem than that of the Creation narrates in twelve books the adventures of the solar hero *Gilgamish* or *Gilgamesh*,[1] who travelled far and wide, even to the land of the dead, in search of the plant of eternal youth. The references to Nimrod in the Old Testament have been supposed to be based on the Gilgamesh epic. Each division of the book corresponds to a sign of the zodiac. The eleventh contains the Babylonian story of the Deluge, as related to Gilgamesh by his ancestor *Utnapishtim*,[2] the Chaldaean Noah, who was saved from the waters by the favour of the gods.

[1] Otherwise read *Izdubar* or *Gisdhubar*. Cp. Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 8, and note; but see Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*[2], p. 574, note 1; Jeremias, *Izdubar-Nimrod*, Leipzig, 1891.

[2] Perhaps = 'one who sees life'; also read as Shamashnapishtim, 'sun of life,' and formerly Khasisadra. For the form *Utnapishtim* see H. Zimmern in *ERE*, ii. p. 314b. T. G.

Let me reveal unto thee, Gilgamesh, the story of my preservation, and the oracle of the gods let me tell to thee. . . . (Ea commanded me) 'Build the ship, save what thou canst of the germ of life. The gods will destroy the seed of life, but do thou live, and bid the seed of life of every kind mount into the midst of the ship. . . . (Then) enter the door of the ship, and bring into the midst of it thy corn, thy property, and thy goods, thy (family), thy household, thy concubines, and the sons of the people. The cattle of the field, the wild beasts of the field, as many as I would preserve, I will send unto thee, and they shall keep thy door.' . . . Six days and nights the wind, the flood, and the storm go on overwhelming. The seventh day when it approached the storm subsided; the flood, which had fought against (men) like an armed host, was quieted. The sea began to dry, and the wind and the flood ended. I (Shamashnapishtim) watched the sea making a noise, and the whole of mankind was turned to clay; like reeds the corpses floated. I opened the window, and the light smote upon my face; I stooped and sat down; I weep; over my face flow my tears. I watch the regions at the edge of the sea; a district rose twelve measures high. To the land of Nizir steered the ship; in the mountain of Nizir stopped the ship, and it was not able to pass over it. The first day, the second day, the mountain of Nizir stopped the ship. The third day, the fourth day, the mountain of Nizir stopped the ship. The fifth day, the sixth day, the mountain of Nizir stopped the ship. The seventh day when it approached I sent forth a dove, and it left. The dove went and returned, and found no resting-place, and it came back. Then I sent forth a swallow, and it left. The swallow went and returned,

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Pinches, *Actes du Premier Congrès d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 1900, reads *Pirnapistim*, which he explains to mean 'Pir is my life,' Pir being a name of Ea (pt. ii. 2 p. 21); so also Haupt, quoted in *PSBA*, xxi. (1899) p. 267. The form Khasisadra is the Xisuthros of Berosus, see M. Jastrow, *Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria*, New York and London, 1911, p. 364 and note. Cp. also E. Schrader, *Cuneiform Inscr. and the Old Testament*, Eng. trans., vol. i. p. 56; Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*[2], p. 566, note 3; A. Jeremias, *Das A. T. im Lichte des Alten Orient*[2], p. 226 ff.; F. Hommel, in *HDB*, i. p. 221; Ungnad and Gressman, *Das Gilgamesh-Epos, neu-übersetzt u. erklärt*, Göttingen, 1911; R. W. Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 80 ff.

and found no resting-place, and it came back. I sent forth a raven, and it left. The raven went and saw the carrion on the water, and it ate, it swam, it wandered away; it did not return. I sent (the animals) forth to the four winds, I sacrificed a sacrifice. I built an altar on the peak of the mountain. I set vessels (each containing the third of an epah) by sevens; underneath them I spread reeds, pinewood, and spices. The gods smelt the savour; the gods smelt the good savour; the gods gathered like flies over the sacrifices. Thereupon the great goddess at her approach lighted up the rainbow, which Anu had created according to his glory. The crystal brilliance of those gods before me may I not forget.[1]

Magical and Astrological

Babylonian thought and practice, moreover, were dominated to a very large extent by belief in omens portents and witchcraft generally; and the minds of the people were occupied with the discovery and manipulation of charms and incantations, wherewith in greater or less degree they might control human destiny, and compel the gods to execute the will of man. An extensive and varied literature gave expression to these beliefs, and provided the means of perpetuating and extending their influence.[2] To a very considerable extent this literature is astrological, expounding the theories of the relation of the heavenly bodies to the lives and fortunes of men, taking note of their position and movements,

[1] The translation is that of Professor A. H. Sayce, in *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments*[5] (1890), p. 28 ff. Cp. George Smith, *Chaldaean Account of Genesis*, ch. xvi.; Ungnad and Gressman, *ut supra*; Rogers, p. 90 ff. The two last-named works are the most reliable and important.

[2] See for a discussion at length of this aspect of Babylonian belief, with many examples, R. Campbell Thompson, *Semitic Magic*, London, 1908, where references to many other works will be found.

and by means of them forecasting the future. The mathematics and astronomy of Babylon were indeed justly famous among the nations of antiquity; but these sciences appear to have been cultivated not so much for their own sake, or for any pure love of the truth, as for the purpose of omens and the foretelling of future events. In this respect they were only treading in the steps which all other peoples of the old world followed. Numbers and the stars were universally believed to exercise a decisive influence, malign or otherwise, on human fortunes. The superiority of the Babylonians consisted in this, that by the side of much which was merely childish and superstitious, they had attained in many particulars to a correct knowledge of arithmetical rules, and of the laws governing the motions of the heavenly bodies.

Religious

That department of the literature which is usually classed as religious,—using the word again in its broadest sense, to cover all that has to do with the worship of supernatural powers, whether in the purest or most debased form,—is both relatively and in actual bulk larger and more important than the rest. In this respect also there would appear to have been a wide difference in mental and spiritual disposition between the men of Babylon and of Assyria. The Babylonians were essentially a meditative and religious people, pondering much upon the gods and their relations to men, raising magnificent temples for their worship, and composing hymns in their honour, which often by their tenderness and pathos recall the Hebrew psalms. The Assyrian was energetic and practical, caring for his gods only in so far as they were able, or believed to be able, to render him help in war. On his soil the temple was always subordinate to

the palace. And his inscriptions proclaimed not so much the glory of the god, as the greatness of the king. When at length the Assyrian in some degree turned to religious faith and practice, it was as the disciple and imitator of Babylon that he learned both. There was little, apparently, that was original in Assyrian thought; and save in one important particular he merely copied and adapted. It is apparent that under the influence of the supremacy of Ashur[1] a monotheistic direction was given by him to a system which had otherwise overloaded itself with gods many and lords many. To Babylon, however, and to her books recourse must be had in order to gain some conception of the religious life and beliefs prevailing among the great nations, who fought and worshipped on the plains of Mesopotamia for many centuries before the birth of Christ.

Variety of Religious Literature

The literature therefore which may more definitely be termed religious is of very varied character, and reflects almost every mood and attitude of the mind in its relation to the unseen. There is an extensive series of texts which present the most naïve and primitive conceptions of the supernatural, exhibiting the worshipper as controlled by fear of demoniacal powers, or attempting to impose his will upon them after the manner usual with all peoples in the early stages of religious thought. And at the other extreme there are found hymns and prayers which, for simplicity and devoutness of expression, for humble contrition of spirit, may take rank with the best compositions of the most spiritually-minded peoples of the ancient world. There was no regular or uninterrupted development

[1] *infra*, p. 174 f.

of religious idea and thought. The lower and the higher co-existed, and probably exerted to a certain extent a considerable mutual influence. On the whole however later conceptions were clearer and more worthy, and the creed and beliefs of Babylon showed a real tendency to free themselves from naturalistic and anthropomorphic traits, and to advance in the direction of a true monotheism. The goal was never reached; but many expressions in the literature fall little short of it, and show how eager and strong was the longing of some of these ancient thinkers to penetrate to a knowledge of the truth.

Spirit Belief

The lowest and most primitive order of thought is represented by a large and increasing collection of magical incantations, of spells and exorcisms, presupposing a widespread and influential belief in spirits and magic, with a corresponding ritual or body of ceremonies, controlled and regulated by the exorcist priests or medicine-men. These men alone were acquainted with the occult powers of the spirits innumerable, who thronged the earth, the air, and the water; and alone were able to influence them for good or evil, to avert the consequences of their malice, or to ensure their favour and goodwill. This spirit-belief or demonolatry, with its attendant priestcraft, may be regarded as the lowest and least advanced stage of religious thought revealed in the literary records of Babylonia.

> The evil (hostile) god, the evil demon,
> the demon of the field, the demon of the mountain,
> the demon of the sea, the demon of the tomb,
> the evil spirit, the dazzling fiend,
> the evil wind, the assaulting wind,
> which strips off the clothing of the body as an evil demon,

conjure, O spirit of heaven! conjure, O spirit of earth!
The (possessing) demon which seizes a man, the demon which
seizes a man,
the (seizing) demon which works mischief, the evil demon,
conjure, O spirit of heaven! conjure, O spirit of earth!

. . . . . .

That which is misformed, that which is unlucky,
that which is racked, even a diseased muscle,
a constricted muscle, a swollen muscle, an aching muscle,
a painful muscle,
conjure, O spirit of heaven! conjure, O spirit of earth!

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Seven are they, seven are they,
in the hollow of the deep, seven they are;
gleams of the sky are those seven.
In the hollow of the deep, in a palace, they grew up.
Male they are not, female they are not.
They are whirlwind-like ghosts; travellers are they.
Wife they possess not, child they beget not.
Compassion and kindness know they not.
Prayer and supplication hear they not.
Horses which are bred in the mountains are they.
Unto Ea are they hostile.
The throne-bearers of the gods are they.
To trouble the canal in the street are they set.
Evil are they, evil are they!
Seven are they, seven are they, seven twice again are they!
O spirit of heaven, conjure! O spirit of earth, conjure![1]

Hymns and Prayers

A second class of religious compositions consists of hymns and prayers to the gods, of which a large number are known. To these has been given not inaptly the name of the Chaldaean Rigveda; and between these writings and invocations of a magical or spiritualistic character no very strict or definite line can be drawn. The two categories overlap, assimilating to one another. Generally speaking,

[1] Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*[3], pp. 441 f., 457 f.; R. C. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 47 ff.

however, the hymns and prayers addressed to the greater gods breathe a loftier spirit, and move on a higher plane of feeling and thought. The Babylonian or Assyrian who addressed his patron deity, or the patron deity of his clan or nation, if he did not conceive of him for the moment as the absolute supreme (*henotheism*), yet regarded him as in grandeur and might exalted to an immeasurable height above men,—therefore not merely a source of possible injury or harm, but in some instances certainly a capable and beneficent dispenser of good. Illustrations are not far to seek.

O lord, who liftest up the torch, who pursuest swiftly the foe,
who carriest away the land of the disobedient, may thy heart be exalted!
Thou who destroyest the life of the evil one, may thy heart be exalted!
Thou who rainest fire and stones upon the enemy, may thy heart be exalted![1]

O Sun-god, on the horizon of heaven thou dawnest!
The pure bolts of heaven thou openest!
The doors of heaven thou openest!
O Sun-god, thou liftest up thy head to the world!
O Sun-god, thou coverest the earth with the bright firmament of heaven!
Thou settest the ear to (the prayers) of mankind;
thou plantest the foot of mankind . . .
The cattle of the god (Ner[2] thou enlightenest).[3]

(O king) of the land, lord of the world!
(O king), first-born of Ea, powerful (over) heaven and earth!
. . . mighty lord of mankind, king of the world, god of gods!

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[1] Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*[3], p. 483; cp. Rogers, p. 141 ff.
[2] *i.e.* Nergal, the god of the dead, *infra*, p. 173 f.
[3] Sayce, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

(Prince) of heaven and earth, who has no rival!
The companion of Anu and Mul-lil!
The merciful one among the gods!
The merciful one who loveth to give life to the dead!
Merodach, king of heaven and earth!
King of Babylon, lord of E-Saggil![1]
King of E-Zida, lord of E-makh-tila ('the supreme house of life')!
Heaven and earth are thine!
All round heaven and earth is thine!
The spell that giveth life is thine!
The breath that giveth life is thine!
The holy writing of the mouth of the deep is thine!
Mankind, even the black-headed race,
the living creatures as many as pronounce a name and exist in the earth,
the four zones, all that there are,
the angels of the hosts of heaven and earth, whatever be their number,
(all worship) thee, and (lend to thee their) ears.[2]

Bowing down in his sanctuary, Assur-bani-pal made his prayer to Nebo his lord:—
I have given myself unto thee, Nebo, thou wilt not forsake me, (even) me;
My life in thy presence is governed, my soul is held in the embrace of Beltis;
I have given myself unto thee, Nebo, (thou) mighty one, thou wilt not forsake me, even me, in the midst of my sins.
There answered a breath from the presence of Nebo his lord:—
Fear not, Assur-bani-pal, long life will I give unto thee;
Fair winds from thy life will I appoint;
My mouth speaking that which is good shall cause thy prayer to be heard in the assembly of the great gods.[3]

The highest point of religious aspiration and

[1] The great temple of Merodach at Babylon; E-Zida was the name of the temple of Nebo at Borsippa.

[2] Sayce, *op. cit.*, p. 501 f.

[3] *Records of the Past*, new series, vol. vi. p. 105.

Penitential Psalms

desire appears to be attained in the so-called 'penitential psalms,' which in spiritual tone and thought mark a real advance upon the hymns themselves, in that they add to the sense of the overwhelming majesty and greatness of the gods, so conspicuous in these, a consciousness of personal guilt and condemnation, which in ancient literature finds its nearest parallel in the Hebrew Psalter. It is from this likeness that the name given to them has been derived. Yet in the examples met with there will be noticed, as would naturally be expected, great inequality of thought and treatment. Some descend to a level little removed from that of magical incantations. In others is manifest a spirit of true sincerity and contrition for sin. And therefore again it is not easy always to draw a clear line of distinction between the penitential psalms and the preceding class of hymns and prayers. They join hands with one another; and examples are readily found illustrating the spirit and characteristics of the two forms united in one. The prayers to the gods bespeak the need and penitence of him who prays. And the penitential psalms are true prayers for forgiveness and mercy.

Lord, my sins are many, great are my misdeeds!
O my god, my sins are many, great my misdeeds!
O my goddess, my sins are many, great my misdeeds!
I have committed faults, and I knew them not;
I have committed sin, and I knew it not;
I have fed upon misdeeds, and I knew them not;
I have walked in omissions, and I knew them not.
The lord, in the anger of his heart, he has stricken me;
The god, in the wrath of his heart, has abandoned me;
Ishtar is enraged against me, and has treated me harshly.
I make an effort, and no one offers me a hand;
I weep, and no one comes to me;

I cry aloud, and no one hears me.
I sink under affliction, I am overwhelmed, I can no longer raise up my head.
I turn to my merciful god to call upon him, and I groan.
. . . . . .
Lord, reject not thy servant;
And if he is hurled into the roaring waters, stretch to him thy hand.
The sins I have committed, have mercy upon them;
The misdeeds I have committed, scatter them to the winds;
And my numerous faults, tear them to pieces like a garment.[1]

'In lamentation is he seated,
In cries of anguish (and) trouble of heart,
In evil weeping, in evil lamentation.
Like doves does he mourn bitterly night and day.
To his merciful god like a heifer he roars;
Painful lamentation does he raise.
Before his god he prostrates his face in prayer.
He weeps, he has drawn near, he holds not back.'
'Let me declare my doing, my doing which cannot be declared.
Let me repeat my word, my word which cannot be repeated.
O my god, let me declare my doing, my doing which cannot be declared.'[2]

The Future Life

Great interest attaches to Babylonian belief with regard to the state of the dead and a future life. The resemblance between the forms which these beliefs early assumed and Egyptian doctrine on the subject of a future life appears incontestable; and a close relationship existed between the creed and teaching of Babylon and ancient Jewish belief, a relationship which extended beyond the form of religious faith, and to a large degree interpenetrated its spirit. Whether in either case there was immediate borrowing, and if so on which

[1] Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*[2], p. 682
[2] Sayce, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

side, is uncertain. No conclusive proof has been offered, or is perhaps possible, of direct dependence of any one of the three upon another. The probabilities seem rather to be in favour of a general independence and independent development of belief in the case of each of the three peoples; the resemblances being due in part to similar tendencies and racial characteristics acting under similar conditions, and in part to a common inheritance of tradition and belief, handed down from a remote ancestry. The hypothesis of a more immediate and direct connection cannot however be excluded.

The most definite information on Babylonian eschatological belief is to be found in three narratives or myths, which relate incidents connected with the underworld. The subject is frequently referred to elsewhere, and the entire literature of prayer and worship may be said in a certain sense to have an eschatological reference. The most material and detailed descriptions of the after-life, as it represented itself to Babylonian thought, are set forth in parts of the Gilgamesh epic, in the story of the Descent of Ishtar to Hades, and a similar legend of Nergal and his sister and queen, Eresh-kigal, who has been supposed to be a counterpart of Ishtar. The first of these, in which Adapa, a son of Ea, through a misunderstanding refuses the gift of immortality offered to him in the food and water of life, presents certain resemblances to the Biblical narrative of the Fall. The second describes the realm to which Ishtar descends, in what is apparently an attempt to take violent possession of its throne; she is imprisoned there, and only with difficulty released through the intervention of a messenger from Ea. In the third

myth Eresh-kigal is the queen of the lower world, with whom Nergal comes into conflict in her own realm, and whom he reduces to subjection, becoming joint-ruler with her of the world below.[1]

These and other references in Babylonian literature would seem to show that the conception of the other world was similar to that of the Hebrew Sheol, a shadowy state of existence, organised after the manner of an earthly kingdom with its pantheon of divine or semi-divine rulers. There was apparently no definite doctrine of a resurrection, or any limit assigned to the sojourn in the realm of darkness; but that a return to the upper world was conceived as at least possible is shown by the narrative of the experiences of Ishtar. The dead man was judged on his entrance into this world, and his condition there was determined accordingly, but also apparently by the manner of his death.[2] Kings received divine honours, as in Egypt and elsewhere, both before and after death; and regard for the dead was shown by the provision of food and drink with other necessities for the future life, and by the observance of the appointed funeral rites.

Character of Gods

The earliest known divinities of Babylonia were attached to sacred places, objects of reverence in a particular district or city, but without recognition or authority in the first instance beyond its limits. They were patrons of the locality or state, whose cult was locally established in some instances from a very early date, before the advent of the Semitic

[1] See M. Jastrow in *HDB*, v. p. 573 ff., and references; *id.*, *Religious Belief in Babylonia and Assyria*, ch. vi.; Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 113 ff.

[2] *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 316.

Babylonians. The most ancient centres of worship, as the most ancient settlements of which we have any knowledge, had their origin in Southern Babylonia,—Eridu and Uru on the right bank of the lower Euphrates, Lagash, Nippur, and others in the plain between the two rivers. In early times the two first-named at least probably stood on the shores of the Persian Gulf, whose waters then extended considerably to the north of their present limits. The deities were often of solar, lunar, or planetary origin; and thus it came to pass that, with the growth of intercourse and communication between the various cities, the local gods were found to possess similar attributes, although worshipped under different names, and a process of mutual identification was carried out. The same result was attained when by any means a given state won a position of primacy among allied, or of supremacy over subject cities or nations, and naturally imposed upon them the worship of its patron god. Thus the authority of a local deity extended with the fame of the city which was the centre and home of his cult; and thus in the course of time, with the establishment of a central authority and civilisation and a state religion, the endless diversity of name and cult in the Babylonian pantheon of the early period became reduced to a comparatively few figures, an aristocracy of gods, who represented the outcome and result of the tendency to unification of names and cults, and the exaltation to supreme rank of important and powerful divinities. The same tendency was at work in Egypt and elsewhere; but on the congenial soil of Babylonia seems to have exerted an even more extensive and permanent influence.

Moreover, from a very early period the gods of

Babylonia are found grouped in 'triads,' or sets of three, who share between one another, according to a fixed and determined order, the government of the universe. Apparently the most ancient and primitive of these triads was that of Anu, Enlil or Bel and Ea, who wielded supreme authority respectively in the heavens, the earth, and the waters. Anu was the local ruler of Erech (Uruk, Warka), Enlil of Nippur, and Ea of Eridu, the city associated with early legends of the waters of the Gulf. Other deities however could claim as high and ancient a parentage; among whom were the three associated more particularly with the worship of the heavenly bodies, Shamash of Larsa, who was but one of many sun-gods, although the greatest and most renowned; Sin, the equally renowned moon-god of Uru; and Ishtar, the queen of heaven, who became the chief female divinity of the Babylonian pantheon, and who was worshipped under different names in different localities. In all probability Ishtar represented originally the evening star; but according to other authorities she typified in the first instance the fertile or reproductive energy of nature.[1]

Triads

Anu, or *Ana*, was the god of the sky, who at Erech was worshipped as the creator of the visible universe. In later times he ceased to have a merely local habitation and connection, and assuming a more spiritual character was regarded as the universal lord of the highest heaven, dwelling in undisturbed repose on the serene heights, above all the turmoil of earth and of the lower regions of the sky. He is designated simply as 'god,' *ilu*; and it has been asserted that in Anu there found expression a real striving after

Anu

[1] See *e.g.* H. Zimmern, *loc. cit.*, p. 311.

monotheism. To him, as apparently to nearly all deities originated or adopted by a Semitic people, was given a wife, *Anat*, whose name is merely a feminine form of Anu and who possessed no real existence or attributes apart from her lord. Afterwards Anat was looked upon as symbolizing the earth; and in the early mythology the union of the two deities symbolized the marriage of heaven and earth. The name Anat, or Anath, occurs in the Old Testament in the designation of the town Beth-Anath (בֵּית עֲנָת, Josh. xix. 38), and also probably Anathoth (עֲנָתוֹת, Josh. xxi. 18, Is. x. 30, Jer. i. 1). Anu was the most abstract, as he was the most exalted and mysterious of the Babylonian gods.

Enlil

Enlil, known also as *Bel* or *Baal*, 'the lord,' was the supreme local divinity of Nippur, the city lying in the centre of the plain of Babylonia, north by west from Erech. He held second place in the triad, apparently because his city stood next in estimation and rank to the chief. The pre-eminence of Bel of Nippur was maintained from very early times; and his fame was only superseded or eclipsed with the rise of Babylon to power, with whose supreme divinity, Marduk, this more ancient Bel was subsequently confused or identified. In the Babylonian narrative of the Flood it is Enlil who seeks to compass the destruction of mankind by a Deluge; and he therefore receives no invitation to the sacrifice offered to the gods by the Chaldaean Noah in gratitude for his deliverance. As the second member of the supreme triad, he held sway over the earth beneath, as Anu over the heaven above. His wife was *Beltis*, who like Anat had no life or authority apart from her husband.

The third member of this primitive triad would

appear to have been from the beginning a water-god, deity of the ocean and rivers. He was the lord of Eridu, now Abu-Shahrein, one of the most ancient cities of Southern Babylonia, standing then at the head of the Persian Gulf, and a great religious centre. Ea was renowned for his wisdom, and his name occurs more frequently than that of any other deity in the magical texts. As the source of all wisdom, he appears also as the instructor of man in knowledge and the arts. His worship was probably connected with early totemistic conceptions; and he is represented on the monuments as a man, either with the lower part of the body terminating in a fish's tail, or with the skin of a fish thrown over his shoulders.[1] According to the tradition preserved by Berosus, he arose out of the waters of the Persian Gulf, under which he again retired every night, spending the day in teaching mankind geometry, agriculture, and all useful acquirements. The

[1] 'In the first year there appeared from out of the Erythraean sea, in the region that borders upon Babylonia, a creature endowed with reason, by name Oannes, as also Apollodorus related. His whole body was that of a fish, and under the fish's head he had another head, with feet also similar to those of a man, that grew out of the fish's tail. His voice too was that of a man; and a representation of him is preserved even to this day. This being was accustomed to pass the day among men, but took no food at that season; and he gave them an insight into letters and sciences and arts of every kind. He taught them to build cities, to found temples, to compile laws, and instructed them in geometry. He showed them the seeds of the earth, and how to collect the fruits; in short, he communicated to them all that could tend to the refinement of life. . . . Now when the sun had set, this being Oannes used to retire again into the sea, and pass the nights in the deep, for he was amphibious. . . . Moreover, Oannes wrote concerning the generations of mankind, and their institutions, and communicated this report to men.' Berosus, *Rerum Chald.*, lib. i.; cp. *ERE* ii, p. 792 b.

origin and meaning of the name Ea are uncertain, and the word is perhaps of foreign derivation. The character also of the legends concerning him has led some to believe that there is here preserved an early tradition, founded on the arrival by sea of a more highly-civilised race, who imposed their culture, and perhaps rule, on the primitive inhabitants. In Babylonian mythology Ea is the father of Marduk; and a rich and widely renowned sanctuary was dedicated to his honour in Babylon itself.

As to Anu and Bel, so to Ea was assigned a wife, *Dav-kina* or *Dam-kina*, 'the lady of the earth.' While however Anat and Beltis were little more than grammatical expressions, Dav-kina held a more independent position, and received personal homage. In her marriage with Ea was symbolized the union of the earth with the waters.

The second triad seems never to have attained to the same position of dignity or acceptance as the first, although its individual members were in themselves of the highest rank and importance. *Sin* was the moon-god, the son, according to the legend, of Enlil or Bel of Nippur; and himself the supreme deity of Uru, the modern Mugheir or Mugheyyar, where a very ancient cult of the moon-god was established. A similar worship, of perhaps equal antiquity, existed at Harran. Sin was the father of Shamash; and the precedence of the moon-god in Babylonian mythology was no doubt due to his importance as the measurer of time. Sin was also said to be the father not only of Shamash, but of Ishtar and of all the gods. In the magical literature also Sin occupies an important position; he gives oracles and sends dreams. The origin of the name has never been clearly explained. It is used to

Sin

denote the moon itself. And the existence of the great temple and cult of Sin at Harran has been supposed to indicate the original derivation of this city from Uru. Sin is depicted on the monuments in human form, but with a crescent moon resting upon his head, or placed close beside his figure.

Shamash

Shamash was the sun-god, the Heb. שֶׁמֶשׁ, the full orb of the sun in all his plenitude of power and with all his attributes. A large number however of the cities of Babylonia had each its sun-god, and the Shamash of the secondary triad was the tutelary deity of Ellasar or Larsa. In Northern Babylonia the chief centre of sun worship was at Sippara, perhaps the same as Sepharvaim (סְפַרְוַיִם, Is. xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13); and in both cities the temple dedicated in his honour bore the same name, *Ebarra*, 'house of light.'[1] Shamash was the giver unto men of healing and light, and taught them justice and truth.

Ishtar

Ishtar, the 'queen of heaven,' was the evening star afterwards modified or transformed into the goddess of love. Whether the association of Ishtar with a stellar cult was original and primitive has been disputed. According to some authorities her primary character was that of an earth-goddess who presided over the operations of agriculture, and promoted the fertility of the ground. She combined in herself various offices and qualities, not always easy to be reconciled. Thus she was represented as a kind of Babylonian Artemis, who delighted in the chase and in slaughter. It has been suggested[2] that in her case the goddesses of the morning and

[1] M. Jastrow, *HDB*, v. p. 543.

[2] Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*,[2] p. 670.

evening stars, originally distinct and with distinct characteristics, have become blended together, the attributes of each being attached to the one person. Ishtar is the only really independent goddess in the Babylonian pantheon. One of the earliest centres of her worship was Uruk. At Babylon also there existed a great temple of Ishtar; and at Nineveh and elsewhere her worship occupied a chief place. The variety of her attributes and characteristics is to be explained by the fact that in her were absorbed or amalgamated other local divinities, who were by their worshippers identified as forms of Ishtar. She figures as an earth-goddess also in the legend of her descent into Hades, to bring back her lost lover Tammūz (תַּמּוּז, Ezek. viii. 14). This Tammūz himself, as the son of Ea, belongs to the city of Eridu, and is another of the numerous sun-gods of Babylonia, representing perhaps especially the sun of the spring-tide, as he emerges fresh and beautiful from the cold grasp of winter, only to succumb in his turn before the scorching blasts of the summer heat.

The origin of the name Ishtar is unknown. The *primâ facie* derivation connects it with the same root as the Persian *stāra*, a star, and with the Hebrew אֶסְתֵּר. Professor Sayce thinks that the word was probably borrowed by the Semites from a foreign people. Others suppose the name to have connoted primarily the idea of 'oversight,' 'presidency,' and to be of Semitic origin, adopted and given currency in Babylon itself, with all the weight and authority of the worship of the capital city. [1] She also in early times is an interpreter of dreams and giver of oracles; but at Babylon she was pre-eminently the warrior queen, and as such is depicted

[1] See M. Jastrow, *l.c.*, p. 541.

in the inscriptions of Hammurabi and on the monuments. The name Ishtar is also used as a simple equivalent for 'goddess.' In the Old Testament, and in Greek legend, it appears as Ashtoreth (עַשְׁתֹּרֶת, 1 Kings xi. 5, 33; 2 Kings xxiii. 13; and plur. עַשְׁתָּרוֹת, 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4, xii. 10, *al.*), and 'Αστάρτη.

As a member of this triad, Ishtar appears to have been early superseded by *Rammān* (*Adad*), the god of the tempest and the thunder, and then took her place by the side of the other planets. The precise order of the names in the triad thus reconstituted varies, the prominent aspect and power of Rammān bringing him sometimes even into the first position. As a storm deity he is represented in a twofold character, beneficent or terrible. It is he who sends the fertilising showers, or blights with lightning tempest or drought. The bull was sacred to him. And in the ancient capital of Assyria he shared a temple with his father Anu. At other times he appears with Shamash in the character of a giver of oracles. In the Hebrew of the Old Testament the name Rammān is read as Rimmon (רִמּוֹן, 2 Kings v. 18), perhaps by a mere confusion with the word for 'pomegranate'; and there also he is identified with the Syrian sun-god Hadad (הֲדַד; *cf.* הַדְרֶךְ, 2 Sam. viii. 3, 5; הַדַּדְרִמּוֹן, Zech. xii. 11).

Adad, Rammān

It does not appear that this arrangement by triads corresponded to any definite religious conception or belief in the Babylonian mind. In its origin it seems to have been more political than religious, the association of towns together for mutual support or defence giving rise to an association of their gods in a common worship. When once the usage had been established, analogy led to the creation of similar

Origin of Triads

triads in other parts of the country. There is found, for instance, the triad of Ea, Marduk, and Nusku; the last-named being identified with the fire-god, later the god of the midday sun, the sun in the zenith, who chases away the demons. Some however of the Babylonian gods were, never, as far as we know, brought into connection with others in this manner. The triads of Babylon, therefore, differed altogether in character from those of Egypt, where a definite and unalterable family relationship, that of father mother and son, always existed between the members. The internal relation at Babylon was altogether less strict, more consciously the fruit of an external necessity or convenience.

Marduk

The only deity who can be said to have attained to anything like a national character was the great sun-god of Babylon, *Marduk* or *Merodach*. The origin and meaning of his name are alike uncertain; but he was early identified with the more ancient lord of Nippur, and became known as Bel-Merodach. The primitive and original nature also of Marduk has been variously explained, as the bright sun of the spring, or as a vegetation deity clothing the earth in fresh verdure. In favour of the last view is adduced the fact that his chief festival at Babylon was celebrated at the New Year. When Babylon rose to the position of capital and mistress of the whole country, at the close of the third millennium before Christ, it was only natural that Marduk also should become supreme over the gods of all the cities of the land. The Babylonians themselves, however, never looked upon him as lord of other nations than their own. It was only by subjugating them and their gods in war, or by more peaceful means, that they were brought under his rule. The conception of a god of the whole earth by

Divine right, so familiar to the Hebrew prophets, was as little realised in Marduk as in any of the lesser and local divinities.[1]

By a natural transference also there came to be ascribed to Marduk acts and functions of supreme power and dignity which hitherto had been predicated of older gods. He gathers into his own hands, as it were, the capabilities and rights of all deities subordinated to him. As the son of Ea he figures as the great warrior and champion of the gods in the conflict with Tiāmat; and is the powerful divine protector even of the other gods, as of his own people. At Babylon a magnificent temple was built in his honour, known as *Ê-Sagila* or *Ê-Saggil*, 'the lofty house,' which is thus described by Herodotus[2]:—

> In the other part of the city was the sacred precinct of Zeus Belus with brazen gates, which remained unto my time, two furlongs square. In the middle of the precinct there was built a solid tower, a furlong in length and breadth, upon which stood a second tower, upon this again a third, up to eight towers. And access was gained to them on the outside by a path that wound round all the towers. About the middle of the ascent is a landing and seats on which to rest, whereon those who make the ascent sit and rest. And on the last tower stands a great temple, in which is a large couch, richly bedecked, with a golden table at its side. But no image of any kind has been erected there. . . . And there is also within the same precinct at Babylon a second temple below, in which is seated a great golden image of Zeus of great size; and by it is set a golden table, and its pedestal and throne are of gold. According to the assertions of the Chaldaeans, the

[1] On a tablet in the British Museum thirteen of the principal divinities are identified with Marduk, indicating a movement of thought in the direction of monotheism. See Pinches in *Acts du Pr. Congr. d'Histoire d. Religions*, Paris, 1900, ii., 2, p. 8 f.

[2] Cp. a letter from George Smith, giving an abstract of a cuneiform description of the temple, quoted in Sayce, *Hibb Lectures*, Appendix II.

weight of the gold was eight hundred talents. Outside again of the temple is a golden altar. There is also a second great altar, where full-grown sheep are sacrificed; for upon the golden altar none but sucklings may be offered. Upon the larger altar also burn a thousand talents' weight of frankincense year by year, when they keep the sacred feast to this god. And there still existed beside, within this enclosure, at that time a statue twelve cubits high, of solid gold. . . . In this manner then was the precinct adorned; and there were in addition many private offerings.[1]

Marduk therefore was *the* Baal or Bel, the greatest and most widely reverenced of all the Bels. Under this name he is referred to in the Old Testament.[2] In the later mythology he was identified with the planet Jupiter. The greatness and fortunes of the Babylonian people are most closely associated with him; his interest and goodwill are always enlisted on their behalf; and to him, therefore, most frequently and importunately their hymns and prayers are addressed.[3]

Nabū

Nabū, in the Old Testament *Nebo*, נְבוֹ, is described by the prophet Isaiah (ch. xlvi. 1) as sharing in the degradation and humiliation which overtake Bel and the false gods of Babylon before Jehovah, the national god of Israel. His name therefore was already known to foreigners as in close association with Marduk; and in the Babylonian mythology the latter was his father. Within the limits also of Marduk's great temple at Babylon a shrine was set apart for the son. Originally he was the patron god of Borsippa (Barsip), a town situated close to Babylon, and not improbably of more ancient foundation, where the

[1] *Herod.*, Book I., chh. 181, 183.

[2] Is. xlvi. 1; Jer. l. 2, li. 44.

[3] Cp. *supra*, p. 97; *ERE*, ii. p. 311 f.; *HDB*, v. p. 545; M. Jastrow, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 ff., 86 f.

ruins of his temple, *Ê-Zida*, 'the eternal house,' have been discovered in the mounds now known as Birs-i-Nimrūd. Later when Borsippa was absorbed in Babylon and became a suburb of the greater city, Nebo also was brought under the influence of its lord, and became subordinated to Marduk. He was the god of soothsaying and prophecy, as well as of writing and of literature generally; and presided especially over the records of fate, of which he is the 'announcer.' His name is thus connected in its origin with the Hebrew term for a prophet, נָבִיא. And by Nebo the will and mind of Marduk were communicated to men. Some authorities have found in him also traits that indicated an earlier connection with vegetation and the spirits of the field. In the later mythology he was identified with the planet Mercury.

Other divinities, in some instances of equally ancient origin, declined in importance and popularity with the cities which they represented. One of the foremost was *Ninib*, the eldest son of Enlil of Nippur, a solar deity, and also or perhaps on that account the promoter of agricultural wealth and fertility. He was also the warrior god, overthrowing all his foes; and with his wife presided over the healing art. In the astrological speculation the planet especially associated with Ninib was Kaimānu (kaivānu, kaiānu, כַּיָּן Am. v. 26), usually identified with Saturn, although originally in the judgement of some equivalent to Mars.

Ninib

Nergal was the god of Kutha (Kutū), now Tell-Ibrahim, and as the setting or dying sun seems to have been regarded as a personification of death, and became lord of the world below, and husband of its queen, Ereshkigal. He was also, like Ninib, a great god of war, and

Nergal

like him a son of Enlil of Nippur. In other aspects of his character he was wont to visit with plague and pestilence. When the planets were assigned to one or other of the great gods, Mars fell to the lot of Nergal; and the latter was therefore a blood-red fiery god, hastening to descend to his kingdom beneath the earth surrounded by flaming clouds. Thus all the known planets became identified with one or other of the chief divinities.

Tammūz

Tammūz (תַּמּוּז, Ezek. viii. 14) symbolized the bright short-lived sun-god of spring, beloved and mourned by Ishtar, and sought for by her after his death in the realms below. The name is said to signify 'child,' and the figure of Tammūz may also have belonged in early times to the cycle of vegetation deities, and have typified the revival of verdure and freshness in the spring, soon to perish under the hot sun of summer.

Ashur

In contrast with the numerous local deities of Babylonia there is found in Assyria a single national god, perhaps in his inception the patron god of the mother-city Assur (A-usar, Ashshur), but as he comes before us historically attached not to a place but to a people; who accompanies them in their journeyings, and is invoked by them at all times of need. It is true that with the Babylonian advance northwards many of the gods originally local, as Marduk and Nebo, were carried with them, and are in consequence invoked by Assyrian kings in their inscriptions with as much fervour as in their native country. But they never took the place of *Ashur*, the great national deity, who personified, as it were, the Assyrian people, and was the living sign and seal of their power and good fortune. In him was much more nearly realised than in any divinity of

Babylonia proper, even in Marduk himself, the conception of a supreme god, supreme not only over his own tribe or nation, but over the whole earth.[1] To him the Assyrian turned in extremity with a sense of national ownership, and the conviction that his honour was bound up with the existence and prosperity of his people. Ashur fought for them in the front of every battle, inspired every counsel, and gave its success to every enterprise. In him is to be found the nearest parallel which the lands of the Tigris and Euphrates can show to the Jewish thought concerning Jehovah; and his character and the language held concerning him go far to show that the Assyrians had formed a truly monotheistic conception of their chief deity. Ashur was not sole god, for the ancient divinities of Babylonia were recognised. He was always however paramount, and no other deity approached him in dignity and power.

Summary: Characteristics of Worship

In this brief survey of the nature of the Babylonian people and their gods, a survey which has of necessity omitted much that is of interest and importance, two facts seem prominently to stand forth with respect to the religion. First and very noticeable is its local character, its attachment to places and towns, the manner in which its deities and worship cluster around localities. Each god is a little kinglet within his own domain, commanding the homage and devotion of his own subjects, but without

[1] The original form of the word is said to be Ashir, 'overseer' or 'protector,' an epithet or title given in Babylonian literature to Marduk; see M. Jastrow, *HDB*, v. p. 547.

recognition outside; extending his authority in the same way as earthly rulers, by conquest, peaceable or otherwise, of the surrounding settlements and countries. This is a condition indeed not peculiar to Babylonia, but more or less characteristic of all primitive tribal relations, when the clan or enlarged family forms the unit, and each tribe is independent, often suspicious of its neighbour. In this instance, however, there is no trace of a nomad or wandering life, such as obtains, for example, in Arabia or the mountainous regions of Kurdistān. Already in the earliest periods to which the records carry us back, tribal distinctions, if such ever really existed, have been obliterated; the people are homogeneous, as far as religious ideas are concerned; and a roving pastoral mode of life has been superseded by fixed settlements on the soil. The township is the unit, both political and religious, not the nomad encampment. Nor is it at all certain that we are justified in assuming that the former condition must in the history of the nation have been preceded by the latter, although no record thereof has been preserved.

A second striking fact in the history and development of the Babylonian religion, which again however is by no means unique, nor indeed unusual, except perhaps as regards the scale on which it is exhibited, is its composite nature. It contains and combines elements taken from the most diverse sources, originating as it would seem in the most dissimilar habits of mind. This feature it shares with Egypt and India, and probably most of the early countries and races where religious speculation has had free course. To some of these characteristics it is worth while briefly to draw attention.

One of the earliest, if not the earliest and most

primitive strain of religious belief in Babylonia, as for the most part elsewhere, was *Shamanism*, the worship of demons combined with the practice of sorcery and magic. Such beliefs necessitated in practice the existence of a powerful class of magician priests, intermediaries between living men and the unseen, who were competent to influence the spirits and were credited with the possession of power to restrain them from the execution of their malicious purposes. The spirits of evil were conceived as present everywhere, haunting and taking possession of every object animate or inanimate, and even entering into men and women, making them the slaves of their malevolent will. There was no sphere of life inaccessible to their influence or free from peril at the dictate of their malice or caprice. Sickness, for instance, was regarded as an evidence of demoniacal possession; while greater epidemics, plagues and so forth, were tokens of the wrath of the more powerful deities. Generally speaking also, the demons of Babylonia were considered to be ill-natured and hostile, bent on injuring and causing hurt and loss to mankind; those of Egypt on the contrary were mild, favourable, or at least neutral.[1]

Shamanism

Closely allied to this belief in and fear of demons was nature worship on a broader scale. The rivers hills and plains, the clouds and storms, the forces and phenomena of nature, were all deified, and appropriate homage paid to them. In most instances among primitive peoples demonolatry and a superstitious

Nature Worship

[1] See for many instructive examples and a full discussion of the subject R. C. Thompson, *Devils and Evil Spirits of Babylonia*, 2 vols., London, 1903–4, and *Semitic Magic*, 1908.

reverence for the powers of nature go hand in hand, and are rarely if ever disjoined. It was so with the tribes and races that met on the Mesopotamian plain. With them, however, the fear of the demons, the powers that willed and had the ability to accomplish evil, seems to have occupied the largest place in their thought and imagination.[1]

Another element that entered into the composite religion of the Babylonians, to what precise extent it is not easy to determine, was *Totemism*.

Totemism

The representation of Ea as half-man, half-fish, or as clothed in a fish's skin, can hardly be dissociated from totemistic ideas, although it would appear that in historic times animals were never in Babylonia actually the objects of worship. Nor, with the exception of Ea, were the greater gods ever represented under animal or semi-animal form. With this may be contrasted the universal animal cult, and the animal-headed divinities of Egypt. Certain creatures however were regarded as under the protection of, or sacred to individual deities, as the eagle to the sun-god, the bull and dog to Marduk, the pig to Adar, the goat to Enlil, the antelope as well as the fish to Ea. Lesser gods, on the other hand, and the genii, both good and evil, were constantly depicted with animal features and attributes. These indications, slight as they may seem to be, and the prevalence of augury or divination by means of birds, all point back to an earlier prehistoric age, when totemistic ideas and practices were widely current. They clearly however never obtained such a hold of the people as in Egypt.[2]

A further element, of more importance in Babylon

[1] *supra*, p. 154 f.

[2] *supra*, pp. 26 ff., 32 f.

than perhaps amongst any other people, was star worship, *Sabaism*, the cult of the host of heaven. Each individual star, as well as the several constellations, if not actually conceived as a deity, was yet the home of the spirit of a god; and the reverence due to the divinity himself was easily transferred to the radiant spot in which he was believed to dwell. That which was originally, in some instances at least, merely the residence and abode, became identified with the god who inhabited it. Thus, as we have seen, each of the five known planets was assigned to one of the greater gods, not only as his dwelling-place, but as coalescing as it were with him, imbued with his spirit, partaking of his attributes, and imparting to him of its own. What has been termed 'astro-theology,' the doctrine of the heavenly bodies and of their influence upon human destiny, filled an exceptionally large place in the theories and beliefs of the Babylonian peoples. It is an illustration of the same fact and tendency that most, if not all the towns had their own especial sun-god, whose worship, with that of the numerous moon-deities, was bound up with similar religious conceptions and views of the constitution of the universe.

Sabaism

From this great variety of heterogeneous elements and beliefs no clear-cut scheme of doctrine emerges. It is hardly possible to define a Babylonian theology, or to do more than indicate characteristic tendencies or lines of thought, which gave colour to an almost infinitely complex whole. There does not seem to have been any strongly marked doctrine or form of belief which, comparably with the Egyptian doctrine of a future

No definite System of Doctrine

life, might be said to be the common and peculiar possession of the race. According to some authorities astrology dominated their creed in every respect, and all the articles of their faith and the attributes of their gods were ultimately reducible to the common denominator of the stars. Others would put in the same place demonolatry, and a fixed belief in the universal presence and potency of evil spirits. The movement towards monotheism is hardly sufficiently defined, except perhaps among the later Assyrians, to give direction to and control popular thought. From the very earliest period also there was a graver, more serious and spiritual strain in Babylonian thought, to which was due the inspiration of the penitential psalms and other literature of the same nature, which marked out some of the people at least as highly sensitive and responsive to religious influences. These latter tendencies, however, seem to have been confined to a strongly personal consciousness, and to have resulted, at least in the earlier periods, in little if any general speculation with regard to a retribution and life after death. It is only in the later writings that there is developed any general eschatological belief, with the accompanying postulate of a merited award of felicity or punishment, to which effect is given in another world.

Eschatology

In these later texts, however, mention is frequently made of an unseen world beyond the grave, which is apparently localised below the earth, where heroes and those who have received due burial pass a life of sensual comfort and indulgence, while the unburied and neglected shades suffer the tortures of hunger and thirst. In all probability this belief in a

shadowy existence after death, similar and of similar origin to the Homeric Hades and the Hebrew Sheol, must have met with widespread acceptance long before it made its appearance in literature. Beyond and above this ill-defined region was the realm of the gods, which, at first apparently identified with, was afterwards distinguished from the general world of the dead. There the great gods dwelt in serene and undisturbed bliss, and in their felicity the semi-divine, semi-mythical heroes of old time shared. Thus far there does not seem to have been any thought of reward or punishment in the future life, or any conception of a different lot for well-doers and evil-doers; rich and poor, high and low, all fared alike, irrespective of personal merit or demerit. Subsequently however a more developed and spiritual idea of the after-life found a place; when admission was given into the heaven of Ea and the gods not only to the deified heroes of ancient time, but also to the great and good of the present. So far therefore as the doctrine of a future life was concerned, a distinct advance may be traced from the shadowy and material to a higher and purer, even if still imperfect and rudimentary form of belief.

Fate

There existed also among the Babylonians a theory of destiny or fate, although this was neither so clearly defined nor so effective in its influence on practical life as among other nations who had formulated and maintained doctrines of a similar character. *Mamit*, rule or law, was exalted to the position of a goddess, and controlled with a power that usually made for evil the workings of the universe and the destinies of men. She is declared to be superior in might to the gods themselves; and

like the angel of death appears as the inexorable inflicter of disease and plague. Human fortunes, however, and the control of the future were always associated much more closely with the stars than with Mamit. The priests invoked the latter, and threatened men with her curse; thus wielding an instrument of terror, which doubtless contributed largely to their own influence and aggrandisement. On the other hand, the effective control of the life and destinies of every man was centred in the heavens; the aspect of which, duly divided into regions or constellations, through and over which the sun, moon, and planets moved, determined unalterably the fate of all. If Mamit was like the thunderbolt, striking unexpectedly here and there with irresistible force; by the stars, in accordance with unchanging inevitable laws, all the routine and events of earth were fixed and controlled.

Influence on Greek and Jewish Belief

How far the Greeks were indebted to Babylonia for their knowledge and beliefs on religious and scientific subjects must still be regarded as an open question. Beyond dispute however there existed between the Jews on the one hand, and the Babylonians and Assyrians on the other, an intimate and far-reaching connection. The character and immediacy of this interrelation have formed the subject of very divergent judgements. In all probability the debt of both to a common ancestry greatly exceeded the direct obligation of either to the other. The examples of similar institutions and practices, however, are too numerous and closely parallel to be matter of accident. The observance of a periodically recurring day of rest and cessation from

business, which bore the title of *Sabbatu*, Sabbath, appears to have been instituted at Babylon from the earliest times. Representations of a tree of life and tree of knowledge may be seen on the monuments; in subsequent times these were confused together or identified; and of their fruit only the initiated were admitted to eat. Babylonian literature preserved legends of a deluge and of the creation of the universe, and recorded the building at Borsippa of 'the illustrious mound,' in which has been found a resemblance to the Biblical account of the Tower of Babel. In the later period also the strength and permanence of the impression made upon the Jewish nation by the Babylonian exile can hardly be exaggerated.

On a review of the whole, it may be said that although there is not found in Babylonia any great distinctive doctrine, as in Egypt, yet a definite degree of progress was achieved, from a lower to a higher platform of faith and practice. Out of the chaos of conflicting elements, of rudimentary religious conceptions, which is to be ascribed in considerable measure to the encounter and reciprocal influence of different races, there emerged or were developed loftier ideas and a purer, less material belief. The advance was not perhaps very great, or the position gained very high. The disentanglement of the spirit from the letter only proceeded to a degree that was still far short of perfection. But the religious beliefs of the people, as exhibited in their later monuments and literature, appear unquestionably to bear evidence of a loftier moral and spiritual tone and character than do the earlier. It may confidently be asserted that when the corporate and national life of Babylonia and Assyria was overwhelmed

Review

and perished before the invading forces of the Medes and Persians, there passed away, to be absorbed and come to fruition in the thought and speculation of younger peoples, something finer and nobler than had imperfectly revealed itself many centuries before from out of the mists of a dim and unfathomed antiquity.

LITERATURE.—The literature on the history and religious beliefs of Mesopotamia is of great extent, and grows rapidly. Probably the best summary in English is M. Jastrow, *Aspects of Religious Belief and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria*, New York and London, 1911. Of especial interest and importance, dealing with the religious thought and development from a broad point of view, is P. Paul Dhorme, *La Religion Assyro-Babylonienne*, Paris, 1910. For the history see esp. L. W. King, *History of Sumer and Akkad*, vol. i., London, 1910; and for the texts R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, Oxford and London, 1912. Cp. T. G. Pinches, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, in series 'Religions, Ancient and Modern,' London, 1906; R. C. Thompson, *Devils and Evil Spirits of Babylonia*, 2 vols., 1903–4; C. H. W. Johns, *Ancient Assyria*, Cambridge, 1912; A. H. Sayce, *Origin and Growth of Religion as illustrated by the Religion of the Ancient Babylonians*[3], London, 1891; articles in *ERE* and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*[11].

CHAPTER IV

BRĀHMANISM AND HINDUISM

Significance and Character of Indian Religions

THE importance of a study of the religions of India for the history of human thought and the development of religious doctrine can hardly be overestimated. Numerically the inhabitants of the Indian peninsula form no small proportion of the human race; roughly expressed they outnumber the Anglo-Saxons, including the entire population of the North American continent, in the proportion of three to two; and three-fourths of the Indian peoples claim to be Hindus. Thus Hinduism in its various ramifications and historical developments commands the adherence at the present day of a large number of convinced and devoted followers. And if its influence has been less widespread than that of some other faiths, it has perhaps been on that account the more intense and deeply rooted. It is impossible to define Hinduism. It is not one religion, but many; whose sole but most potent bond of union is hereditary custom and social practice, and in a lesser degree in recent times a newly-awakened consciousness of national life, and an endeavour to achieve by means of an appeal to religion some measure of national solidarity. There is no distinct doctrine or belief held in common by all Hindus. There are elements and tendencies of

faith with which most would find themselves in declared sympathy. As the following discussion however will abundantly show, almost every phase and growth of human thought is at home beneath the broad shelter of the Hindu name. In creed no less than in practice a company of Hindus may find themselves further apart than Roman Catholics and Protestants, although in the one case as in the other a common title is owned by all.[1]

History

It is only within comparatively recent years that it has become possible to write a consecutive and fairly complete history of early India, and of the movements of its peoples. The history has thrown much light on the progress and interaction of the various phases of religious belief; and much more will be gained from research for the chronology and mutual influence of the rival sects. The sources which have contributed to elucidate the facts and conditions of ancient Indian life are of unequal value, but may be regarded generally as of three classes: (1) archaeological, including inscriptions and coins and the rich results of excavations carried on at ancient sites, for the most part Buddhist; (2) traditions of native origin, preserved in native records and compositions

[1] The following is the distribution of religions in India according to the census of 1911, out of a total population of 312½ millions:—Hindu, 217,586,920; Sikh, 3,014,466; Jain, 1,248,162; Buddhist, 10,721,453; Parsi, 100,096; Muhammadan, 66,623,412; Christian, 3,876,196; Jewish, 20,980; Animistic, 10,295,168. The small remainder consisted for the most part of those who made no return of their religious faith. The number of these is only from a third to a fourth as great as at the preceding census. The largest proportional increase during the decade is among the Christian community; and of the numerically less important religions the Sikh faith is remarkable, having added to its total nearly a million adherents.

often of very uncertain date; (3) contemporary literature and narratives, partly foreign and partly native Indian, of which the former has proved the more important for the purposes of orderly chronology and of linking the internal history of India with the history of the outside world. The intricacies of racial movement and interaction could hardly have been consecutively traced at all without the aid of foreign travellers and observers. The earliest were the Greeks, contemporaries of Alexander the Great and his successors. A few centuries later these were succeeded by the Chinese pilgrims, who came to visit the sacred places of the Buddhist faith and in search of Buddhist books. Finally the Muhammadan historians and men of letters followed, who recorded the deeds of the conquerors of India, and in biography and panegyric and story have left a vivid picture of the life and manners of their own age. In every instance the gain to the student of Indian religious thought has been considerable, and it is now possible to trace its development and to map out its provinces with a degree of confidence that even half a century ago would have been out of place.

Ethnology

It is moreover hardly possible to appreciate the blending of various forms of religious belief in India and to record the stages of their growth without some reference to the ethnological past of the country, and the historic relations of the great variety of races that form its population. The underlying basis of all Indian belief is animism, and the primitive faiths of the early or indigenous population of the peninsula were animistic in character, using the term in its broadest sense, as far as it is possible to draw conclusions with regard to a far distant past. It is usually and

probably rightly assumed that these peoples were Dravidian by race, allied to the present inhabitants of the Deccan, but at that time holding the entire land from the Himālayan range in the north to the extreme southern point of Cape Comorin. Upon this original stratum of population, itself very varied in its nature and probably far from uniform in practice or belief, there were super-imposed two distinct streams of foreign influence, representing the invasions of alien races, who severally brought with them not only a different ethnological character and stock, but a different type of religious faith; and the latter, existing side by side with beliefs and practices already in possession, more or less completely assimilating them and adopting their gods, perhaps received as much as it gave in the synthesis which was the final result. The two invasions were the Mongolian or Tibeto-Burman from the north-east, a portion of which was deflected southwards into the valley of the Irawadi, and the remaining portion that entered India clung for the most part to the foot-hills of the Himālayan ranges, penetrating as far west as Kashmīr; and the Āryan or Indo-European from the north-west. Of these the last was incomparably the more important. The incoming Āryans dominated the land, not only politically and socially, but most effectively from a religious point of view. The process of infiltration, whether of social or religious ideas, was certainly gradual, and prolonged itself, perhaps over many centuries; there were many impulses or waves of immigration of Āryan tribes making their way over the passes, and settling in the broad plains of the Panjāb, or pressing eastwards down the river valleys as far as the United Provinces and the borders of Bengal. Others moved southwards, and eventually found their way

into Southern India, perhaps in no great numbers, by the level strip of country between the western extremity of the Vindhya range and the sea. In every case the movement of the tribes was determined by the configuration of the land in which they found themselves, and by the great controlling and impassable ranges of the Himālaya and Vindhya mountains. The most important Āryan settlement, and one of the earliest, was in that part of the valley of the Ganges which came to be known as *Madyadeśa*, the 'middle country,' of which the district lying between the lower courses of the Ganges and Jumna before their meeting-point was the centre, with its apex at the sacred city of Prayāga, the modern Allahābād, where the Sarasvatī, flowing underground, was supposed to unite its waters with the sister streams. Here was elaborated the great system of Brāhmanic creed and ritual, which succeeded in imposing itself upon the religious life and thought of the whole of India. The process again was in all probability very gradual. On the basis however of primitive Āryan belief there was built up, apparently first in Madyadeśa, that elaborate and potent system of belief and practice which, as Brāhmanism and its later development Hinduism, has held together the Indian peoples through long centuries in spite of all the disruptive forces of varieties of race and condition. Popular Hinduism, even at the present day, is no more than animism, with a thin veneer of Hindu names and forms; but the more thoughtful and considered beliefs are of Āryan origin, and in general it is to the working of the Āryan mind that they owe their development and the final shape in which they have passed into the most intimate religious life of the people.

The remaining elements of the population are of

comparatively little account in a religious sense. The Hill Districts everywhere are occupied by primitive tribes, whose faiths have frequently borrowed an outward form from Hinduism, but which are at heart animistic and devil worshipping. Such are in the Deccan the Toda, Badaga, and other tribes; in Central India and on the Vindhya Hills the Gonds, Kolis, etc.; and in the north and north-west, on the southern slopes and foot-hills of the Himālayan mountains, tribes of Mongoloid origin or connection profess in a more or less debased form the Buddhist faith. Neither Jews nor Parsīs exercise any religious influence. The latter are Zoroastrians, and have never sought to proselytize. In the Haidarabad State there are a few families of pure Arab descent, who form part of the Muhammadan population of the peninsula, but who are unable, even if so desirous, to carry on any propaganda in favour of a faith which they hold with extreme conviction and tenacity. And in Kāthiāwār and the northern districts of the Bombay Presidency many of the people and even the rulers betray in their features the presence of a negro element in their ancestry due to slaves imported in bygone years from Africa. Finally the comparatively large Indo-European or Eurasian[1] population throughout India, nominally Christian, has been hitherto in general listless and indifferent with regard to religion; were they to arouse themselves to a strenuous and active propaganda on behalf of their faith they might well exert a determining influence on the religious future of their native land.

[1] The latter title, formerly universal but never adopted or favoured by the people themselves, has now been officially discarded. It was not at any time intended to convey a stigma, but merely to state a fact.

Thus four great religions, either by their origin or present position, may claim to have had a share, though to a very unequal degree, in the moulding of Indian thought and belief. Hinduism is and has been the most potent force, with a sway unbroken and for many centuries unchallenged. Buddhism, once its successful rival, is practically extinct throughout India.[1] Muhammadanism has always been and to a certain degree still is exotic, foreign in most respects to the real Indian character. The fourth is Christianity, which, though small in numbers, has made the largest comparative increase within the last few decades. Its adherents, drawn for the most part from the lower strata of society, command respect by their character and the high educational position they have attained; and represent at the present day the most aggressive religious force that is at work within the limits of the Indian peninsula.

Four Great Religions in India

Every serious attempt to understand the ancient religions of India must begin from the Veda. The life and thought of the people are so saturated with the teaching of their sacred books, more often indirectly than directly received, that to withdraw these from consideration would be to take away the foundation upon which all rests. Much has been incorporated from various sources and at different times; but the Vedic writings are the underlying basis and substance to which the foreign ideas and practices have been accommodated. It is not too much to say that the Veda, with all that springs from it and depends upon it, has played

Necessity of a Study of the Veda

[1] See *infra*, p. 435 f.

as important a part in the formation of Indian character and life as the Bible in the development of the nations of the West. And as the history of Europe cannot be rightly read apart from the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, so in her Sanskrit Veda India has found the authoritative religious bond which, however loosely, has held together the heterogeneous peoples that dwell between the Himālayas and Cape Comorin, and moulded them into a real if incomplete likeness of thought and conviction.

Meaning of the Name

The term *Veda* signifies knowledge, from the root *vid*, to know, and is equivalent to the Greek οἶδα, ἰδεῖν, and the Latin *video*. The title is given collectively to the sacred writings of the Hindus, which like our own Bible constitute rather a library of books than a single treatise dealing with a single subject; and which, again like the Bible, are due to many authors, and have been composed at widely separated intervals of time. These works are written in Sanskrit, for the most part of an ancient and difficult type, with a highly elaborate grammar and an almost exhaustless vocabulary.[1] For a long period they were handed down mainly if not entirely by oral tradition, being committed to memory in the various schools of learning. It was not apparently until the eleventh century of our era that the practice began of writing down the sacred books, lest the accurate remembrance of them should be lost; but the belief still held its ground that the memory formed a safer repository of the

[1] Cp. A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Grammar* in *GIAP*, Strassburg, 1910; J. Wackernagel, *Altindische Grammatik*, pt. i. *Lautlehre*, Göttingen, 1896, pt. ii. 1 *Nominalkomposition*, Göttingen, 1905.

sacred lore, less liable also to injury or defilement, than ink and paper.[1]

The *Veda* then contains and conveys *knowledge*, wisdom embodied and concrete, comprising within its limits all that in the belief of the orthodox Hindu needs to be known for this life or for the next. What is written in the Veda is wisdom; what is not so written is foolishness, or at least is superfluous and of no material consequence. This conception represents the average Hindu estimate of his sacred writings during the last two thousand years, untouched by European literature and thought. On the other hand, however, the influence of modern education, its science philosophy and religion, is modifying, and has already profoundly modified the attitude of mind of very many in India in recent times; so that the theories and doctrines which their fathers received on authority do not satisfy them. And criticism or even scepticism with regard to the contents of the books themselves has received a marked impulse from the spread of a wider knowledge of science and from the altered conditions of Eastern life.

Contents of the Veda

The authors of the Veda were known as *rishis*, and were believed to have received the books by a direct revelation from heaven,—verbal inspiration, in its most literal and rigid form. This revelation, moreover, came to them not through the ear, but

[1] Cp. Max Müller, *Physical Religion*, new edition, 1898, pp. 33 ff.; who quotes Al-Birūnī as stating that the prohibition against writing was enforced in his day. It seems not improbable that the need for reliable transcripts was first felt in the confusion and destruction incident to the Muhammadan invasion. The art of writing itself was of course known and practised in India for many centuries before this date.

through the eye. They actually *saw*,—for such is the technical and doubtless in its origin merely poetical and metaphorical term,—the compositions attributed to them.[1] Although not a few of them claim in so many words to have been the authors of their own works, their claim is ignored, so far as the play of individual mind or character is concerned. And thus while a religious homage and worship is paid to them, the theory concerning their place and function reduces them to simple machines, through whose eyes and pens the words of the gods have been faithfully transmitted to men. They are to be honoured accordingly as the vehicles, but in no sense whatever the originators, or even the shapers of the literary works attributed to them, and handed down from them by oral tradition. This sacred literature is also termed *S'ruti*, heard, that which comes by direct revelation from the Deity, as distinguished from later uninspired works known as *Smriti*, remembered, or that which owes its origin and preservation to the initiative and instrumentality of man.[2] This conception of a direct revelation of Himself made by God to man, so unfamiliar in this wide and general form at least to Greek and Roman thought, is met with continually in the religions of Eastern nations ;

[1] The term *rishi* was supposed to be derived from the root *dṛiś*, to see; compare Heb. רוֹאֶה, and Eng. *seer*. Possibly, therefore, the belief in question had its origin merely in a popular etymology. The real derivation of the word is uncertain; but it is probably to be traced to a root *rić*, to praise. According to *S'at. Br.*, vi. 11., the conception is taken from the root *rish*, to suffer hurt or harm, i.e. through *tapas*. See Deussen, i. 1 p. 199.

[2] Cp. *Manu*, ii. 10 :—'By S'ruti is meant the Veda, and by Smriti the Institutes of the sacred law; those two must not be called into question in any matter, since from those two the sacred law shone forth.'—*SBE*, vol. xxv. p. 31.

who seem to have lived in closer communion, as it were, with the unseen and supernatural than the peoples of the West.

The Veda, or more strictly speaking the Vedas, the most ancient documents of the religions of India, consist if the nature of their contents be considered of three parts :— **Historical Classification**

(1) *Mantra*, or liturgical texts, hymns of prayer and praise, for the most part written in poetry.[1]

(2) *Brāhmana*, formulae and precepts referring to ritual and sacrifice, in prose generally of an archaic character.[2]

(3) *Upanishad*, mystical or secret doctrine, esoteric philosophy and theological speculation, in prose or verse.[3]

By the side of this triple classification according to subject-matter there was a quadruple division, not perhaps so ancient as the other, of the Vedic writings into four different collections, of which the first is the oldest and by far the most important. These are :—

(1) *Rig-Veda*, containing the greater number of the hymns, and forming the ceremonial text-book of the *Hotri* priests.

(2) *Yajur-Veda*, or Veda of sacrifice and ritual; a collection of texts, not independent but for the most part taken with slight changes from the Rig-Veda. It is divided into two parts, the *Taittirīya* and *Vājasaneyin*, named also the Black and White

[1] *infra*, p. 207, 235.
[2] *infra*, p. 242 ff.
[3] *infra*, p. 255 ff.

Yajur-Veda.[1] Its appropriate priests are the *Adhvaryus*.[2]

(3) *Sāma-Veda*, which again borrowed most of its verses from the Rig-Veda, and is merely a compilation of liturgical forms for use by the *Udgātri* priests in the ceremonies connected with the sacred Soma plant.[3]

> The hymns of the Rigveda, in which the authors give expression to the awe or reverence which they felt in presence of the powers of nature, are the earliest extant monuments of the Sanskrit language. The precise date however of their composition is very uncertain. Nor are they all contemporaneous, belonging to the same age or place. It is probable that the composition of some of the hymns should be ascribed to the period before the Āryan tribes entered India; others reflect the conditions of life in the Panjāb, others again may be the work of even later poets The whole collection was preserved and studied in the circles or schools of Northern India, which in different localities and in the centres that were no doubt originally tribal devoted themselves to the task of conserving and transmitting unimpaired the sacred lore. The editions or recensions which prevailed in these various schools were known as *śākhās*, 'branches,' or 'divisions,' each school or *ćaraṇa* having its own traditional text and interpretation. Thus of the Rigveda there are said to

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[1] White, *śukla*, because here the mantra and brāhmana portions are kept distinct. In the Black, *krishṇa*, they are mingled together. The latter is probably the more ancient. See Max Müller, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*[2], p. 350 f.; H. Baynes in *Indian Antiquary*, xxvi. (1897), p. 213. Cp. *infra*, p. 200 f.

[2] There is an interesting parallel to the three classes of Vedic priests in the ancient Babylonian ritual, where three priests belonging apparently to different schools or castes take charge each of a different part of the ceremonies. They were the *barû*, augurs or seers; the *aśipu*, exorcists or wizards; and the *zammaru*, singers, whose duty was to chant the sacred texts. See R. C. Thompson, *Semitic Magic*, p. xxi. ff.

[3] Cp. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 3 f.; *infra*, p. 212 ff.

have been originally five *śākhās*, those of the Āśvalāyanas, Bāshkalas or Vāshkalas, Māṇḍukāyanas, S'ākalas, and S'ānkhāyanas. Of these however only one is extant, that of the S'ākalas; and of the rest nothing of importance seems to be known, except that the Bāshkala recension contained eight additional hymns.[1] Of the Sāma and Yajur-Vedas, out of a large number of recensions that are said to have existed only a few have been preserved. Of the former the śākhās[2] of the Jaiminīyas, Kauthumas, and Rāṇāyanīyas are extant in their entirety, and that of the Naigeyas in parts. Of the Black Yajurveda three are known, those of the Kāthas, Maitrāyaṇīyas and Taittirīyas; of the White two, the Kāṇvas and Mādhyandinas. These are all included under the term S'ruti, and are regarded as authoritative and inspired.

The Rigveda

In its present form the Rigveda consists of ten *mandalas* or books, with a total of 1,028 hymns. Of these, however, eleven that are added at the end of the eighth book are a later addition. The *mandalas* form independent collections belonging to one or other of the great Vedic families, the names of which are given by tradition[3]; and the arrangement both of the books themselves and of the hymns within the books bears evidence of careful design and of the hand of the editor. Hymns ascribed to the same author or family are grouped together, those also that are addressed to the same deity. Of the ten books six, viz. *Mand.* 2–7, consist each entirely of hymns which have a common source in a single writer or circle of writers; and with the exception of the eighth and ninth all the mandalas begin with a hymn in praise of Agni,

[1] Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1900, p. 52.

[2] See Monier-Williams, *Sanskr. Dict.*, *s.v.* śākhā; Barth, p. 4, and notes.

[3] Max Müller, *Physical Religion*, p. 59 f.

which in the case of the first seven is immediately followed by a hymn to Indra. The ninth book contains only hymns in praise of the Soma (=Iran. *Haoma*); and is generally regarded as in its original form probably the oldest part of the collection, for the ritual with which it deals may be traced back to Indo-Iranian times.[1] The tenth book is of a more miscellaneous character, undoubtedly of later origin, and suggests in many respects a gathering up of the fragments subsequent to the formation of the earlier collections. Its authors are acquainted with the preceding books, the language of which they quote. Also in grammar and diction there is deterioration, and later forms appear. Moreover the deities to whom appeal is made are in some instances the speculative products of a later stage of thought, and abstract conceptions are found which are alien to the simplicity of the earlier books. Between the date of the most ancient hymns and the final redaction of the whole a very considerable period must have elapsed.[2]

[1] Macdonell, p. 42 f.

[2] Apart from native Indian copies the *editio princeps* of the Rigveda in the original text with Sāyana's commentary was published by the late F. Max Müller in 6 vols. in the years 1849–74. A second edition in 4 vols. 4to appeared in 1890–92. In the *Indische Studien*, vols. vi., vii., are contained *Die Hymnen des Rigveda*, herausgegeben von Th. Aufrecht, 2 vols., 1861–63, second edition 1877. Two volumes of *Hymns from the Rigveda*, with Sāyana's commentary and notes, were published in the Bombay Sanskrit Series, Nos. 36 and 58, 1888 and 1899; other selections in O. Böhtlingk, *Sanskrit-Chrestomathie*[3], Leipzig, 1897, and elsewhere. Two volumes of renderings into English of selected hymns by F. Max Müller and H. Oldenberg appeared in *SBE*, xxxii. and xlvi., Oxford, 1891 and 1897; and a German translation in 6 vols., by A. Ludwig, in 1876–88. Many other editions of parts of the texts in the original or in translation have been published, and important commentaries, of which the

To secure the preservation and accurate transmission of these sacred texts various means were adopted. No ancient manuscripts of the Rigveda exist, and for many centuries the hymns were handed down solely by word of mouth. There can be no doubt, however, that the existing form of the text faithfully reproduces the form in which they were composed, or at least in which they found a place in the final collections of hymns. The more recent Vedic texts quote largely from the Rigveda, and later Sanskrit literature makes frequent mention of the number of verses in a hymn, or of hymns in a book. Both quotations and references are found to be in exact correspondence with the extant text. Not only the hymns themselves, but the verses and words they contained were counted and carefully registered by the Sanskrit grammarians, in works known as *prātiśākhyas*, grammatical commentaries on word-formation, pronunciation, etc., and *anukramaṇīs*, which furnish tables of contents, etc., of the various books. As a further aid to memory the text was recited syllable by syllable after a method known as *kramapāṭha*, or 'serial reading,' in which each word was repeated twice in progressive order, with the preceding and also with the succeeding word. A curious extension of the same method was the *jaṭāpāṭha*, 'twisted' or 'inverted

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latest are by K. F. Geldner, *der Rigveda in Auswahl*, pt. 1 *Glossar*, Stuttgart, 1907, pt. 2 *Kommentar*, 1909; and H. Oldenberg, *Rigveda, Textkritische und exegetische Noten, erstes bis sechstes Buch*, Berlin, 1909. Cp. Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, ch. iii.; A. Kaegi, *Der Rigveda die älteste Literatur der Inder*[2], Leipzig, 1881 (English translation, Boston, 1886); Barth, p. 2 ff.; Max Müller, *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*[2], London, 1860, ch. i. *passim*.

The great native commentator Sāyana lived and worked at Vijayanagara, near Bellary in South India, in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Besides his grammatical and exegetical commentary on the Rigveda, he was the author of many other works. The earliest known commentary is that of Yāska, who must have lived some centuries before Sāyana. Professor Macdonell assigns his life to the fifth century B.C. (*op. cit.*, p. 269). He wrote the *Nirukta*, a treatise explaining and commenting on difficult or obsolete Vedic words. It can be shown that Yāska's text of the hymns was essentially the same as that now extant; and in his work he quotes the names of sixteen or seventeen others who preceded him in the task of elucidation and discussion.

reading,' in which each combination or pair of words was repeated three times, in one instance in inverted order.[1]

Yajur and Sāma-Vedas

The Yajur and Sāma-Vedas are of comparatively little importance for the history of Indian thought. Their interest is for the student of ritualistic practice; and they are not only later than and dependent on the Rigveda, but the larger part of both consists of extracts from the latter. For example, of the 1,549 verses of the Sāmaveda, only seventy-eight are not already found in the Rigveda, as it is now extant; and most of the verses are derived, as might perhaps be expected, from the ninth book. The Sāmaveda is divided into two books, of which the second is later, and in part quotes from the first. Its verses were intended to be chanted or sung at the Soma worship, while those of the Rigveda were for simple recitation. The sacrificial formulae of the Yajurveda were to be muttered as incantations or prayers during the time of the presentation of the offering.

Of the two divisions of the Yajurveda, the Taittirīya and the Vājasaneyin, the former is more prevalent in the south of India, the latter in the northern and central districts. The Taittirīya comprises seven chapters or books, the Vājasaneyin forty, of which the first eighteen are older than the rest; the whole, however, is later than the Black Yajurveda. The texts are partly in prose and partly in verse, the latter being derived to a large extent from the Rigveda. They are designed for use in the ritual more especially of the fire-altar, and of the observances connected with the new and full moon and

[1] See Monier-Williams, *ss.vv.*; Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 50 ff.; Max Müller, *ut supra*, App. vii.

the Soma sacrifice ; the former is the subject of the fourth book of the Taittirīya recension and of chaps. 11–18 of the Vājasaneyin, the latter of chaps. 1–10.[1]

Thus the interest which in the Rigveda centres in the worship of the gods and the relation of the worshipper to them has in the later Vedas passed to the ritual. And the enhanced significance of the ritual, together with the growing importance attached to the sacrifice, has resulted in the development of a priestly caste, in whose hands were the arrangements for the due performance of the rites, and by whom alone was preserved the knowledge of the sacred texts. This was the most significant change to which these later Vedic collections witness, the displacement of the religious emphasis from worship to ritual. Its consequences were of the utmost importance for the religious and social life of India ; and the movement of thought and practice, to which it bears witness and which in turn it promoted, exerted a marked influence on the entire history of the Indian people.

These collections of verses or hymns are termed *Saṁhitās* ; and besides the Saṁhitā, each Veda comprised one or more *Brāhmaṇas*, in which were contained and summarised the directions for the correct observance of the ceremonies. The texts, therefore, of the Sāma and Yajur-Vedas consist almost entirely of Brāhmaṇa. Attached to each Brāhmaṇa as a kind of exposition or supplement was an *Upanishad*[2], treating of doctrine, philosophy, and speculative themes in general. There was no clearly maintained distinction, however, in character

[1] Barth, p. 2 ff. ; Macdonell, ch. vii.

[2] *infra*, p. 255 ff.

and limits between the parts; the tendency was always present to harmonize and accommodate, and to pass unconsciously from one method of treatment or thought to another. Especially was this true of Brāhmaṇa and Upanishad, where no hard and fast line of separation can be drawn, and overstepping takes place from either side.

Atharva-Veda

The fourth Veda, that of the Atharvans or Angirases,[1] two ancient priestly families, is of an interest and importance second only to that of the Rigveda itself. Like the latter it is a collection of hymns, 730 in number, divided into twenty books, of which the last two are of later date and origin than the rest, the twentieth book consisting almost entirely of extracts from the Rigveda. But the hymns themselves reflect the popular and magical side of religion, and are of the nature of charms, incantations, etc., to ward off diseases, or to conjure the evil spirits. Some of the texts are of great age, and affinities have even been traced between them and certain old and popular charms of Europe.[2] Like similar compositions in other lands also they are anonymous, and no tradition appears to exist as to the authors of the text. A later name for this Veda was Brahma-Veda, the Veda of the sacred word, or of prayer[3]; and Hindu writers say that the Atharvaveda was designed especially for the use of the Brāhmans. Of this last however there seems to be no proof, nor any indication of such a limitation in practice.

[1] The oldest name combines the two—*Atharvāṅgirasaḥ*.

[2] Macdonell, p. 185 f.

[3] Cp. art. Brahman in *ERE*, ii. p. 796 ff.

The first eighteen books form the real collection of the Atharvaveda, the remaining two books being secondary and late. They consist of three divisions, distinguished less by subject-matter than by form: (1) bks. i.–vii., short compositions of less than twenty verses on miscellaneous subjects; (2) bks. viii.–xii., longer hymns, with a similar variety of theme; (3) bks. xiii.–xviii., which are classified according to subject-matter, viz. hymns to the sun (xiii.), marriage texts (xiv.), texts dealing with the *vrātya*, or twice-born man who through neglect has become an out-caste (xv.; cp. Manu, ii. 39), prayer to the sun (xvii.), and the funeral ceremonies (xviii.). Book xvi. alone is not characterised by unity of subject, and both that and the seventeenth book are very brief. In this last of the three divisions also unity of authorship is traditionally asserted within the limits of some of the books. Although this threefold division is thus well marked and of so artificial a character, there seems to be no trace of an earlier collection or of the separate existence of any one of the parts.

Two recensions of the Atharvaveda are known, which differ considerably from one another, the Vulgate or *S'aunakan*, as above described, and the *Paippalāda* or Kashmīrian. The latter both omits from the ordinary text and contains additional material; the parts also that the two recensions have in common are differently arranged. It is usually and probably rightly considered that they represent independent collections made from the large mass of traditional and oral folk-lore, charms, etc., current among the people. The Paippalāda recension is known only in a single birch-bark manuscript discovered at S'rīnagar by the late Dr. G. Bühler about the year 1873. The MS. consists of nearly 300 leaves, with from 13 to 23 lines of writing to the page; and is dated *saṁvat* 95, i.e. 1519 A.D. It was published in facsimile by Bloomfield and Garbe in 1901; but the editors characterise the text as very defective and full of errors. The Vulgate text was edited by Roth and Whitney at Berlin in 1855–56; and an English translation with full commentary and introduction was published by W. D. Whitney and C. R. Lanman, in two volumes, Cambridge, Mass., 1905. Cp. M. Bloomfield, *The Atharvaveda*, in *GIAP*, Strassburg, 1899, and the same scholar's translation of selected hymns in *SBE*, vol. xlii. The Sanskrit *prātiśākhya* confines its commentary to the first eighteen books. There are also

extant two *anukramaṇīs*, of which the earliest exists only in a fragmentary state; the second is known as the 'major,' but is not independent of the former. It has been edited by the late Professor Whitney from a manuscript in the British Museum.

Thus it was owing to the nature of its subject-matter, and not to the more recent origin of its texts, that the recognition accorded to the Atharvaveda as of canonical standing was given late. The fact is attested by the habitual employment by the most ancient writers of the term 'triple Veda,' *trayī vidyā*.[1] The Atharvaveda was passed over in silence and ignored, not because it was non-existent, but because the teachers and custodians of the hymns and orthodox ritual looked down upon popular practices which savoured of magic and the black art, and refused in any way to countenance them. When once it had won literary and official recognition its importance was fully acknowledged, as in the Mahābhārata and by Manu himself; later still and in some connections it even takes precedence of the other three. The internal character also of individual hymns of the collection often suggests a considerable antiquity.

As to the date of these writings the utmost possible

[1] Compare for example the commentator on the Veda quoted by Max Müller, *History*[2], p. 122 :—'As there are three different branches of the ceremonial, the Veda is, for the better performance of the sacrifices, divided into three: the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, and Sāma-Veda. The ceremonial of the Hotṛi priests is performed with the Rig-Veda; that of the Adhvaryu priests with the Yajur-Veda; that of the Udgātṛi priests with the Sāma-Veda. The duties of the Brāhman priests, and of him for whom the sacrifice is offered, are also contained in these three Vedas. The Atharva-Veda is not used for solemn sacrifices, and is very different from the others.'

Origin and Date of Vedic Writings

variety of opinion has prevailed, and only general and approximate limits can be assigned, leaving still a somewhat wide margin of doubt. That the mantra portion is the oldest, the evidence of style and language as well as of subject-matter proves. The meaning of the text also was frequently obscured or even entirely lost in the Brāhmaṇa period. On these hymns and texts the rest is founded, assumes their existence and authority, and derives from them its inspiration. A similar relation holds between the Brāhmaṇas and Upanishads. The descending order in time would therefore be mantra, including the ancient hymns, brāhmaṇa, upanishad. On the other hand, the teaching, perhaps even the language of some at least of the Upanishads is presupposed by Buddhism; whose origin dates from the fifth century before our era. Parts of the Brāhmaṇas are generally regarded as not earlier than this period. This gives a *terminus* anterior to which the larger portion of the sacred literature of India must have come into existence. The whole question however is surrounded with difficulty; and it is hardly likely that an entirely satisfactory settlement will ever be reached. The tendency of modern research is to reduce within more moderate limits the excessive antiquity claimed by some Sanskrit scholars for the Vedic writings. But the opposite extreme of their comparatively modern character can certainly not be maintained in the light of history.[1]

[1] Dr. Haug, for instance, assigns the beginning of Vedic literature to as early a date as 2000–2400 B.C.; cp. Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*[3], i. p. 4 f. The highest antiquity however in modern times is maintained by Professor H. G. Jacobi, who regards the two millennia 4500 to 2500 as the flourishing period

Deities and Doctrine of the Vedic Hymns

The religious belief expressed and embodied in these ancient hymns is nature worship, the personification of the visible phenomena and forces of the world around and of the sky above, with appropriate homage and devotion paid to each. With a few exceptions in the tenth book, all the hymns give expression to religious thought and aspiration, in devout praise of the gods and desiring benefits at their hands. That

of Vedic culture, in the latter half of which the hymns had their origin. See an article by Jacobi 'On the Antiquity of Vedic Culture' in *JRAS*, 1909 p. 721 ff., 1910 p. 456 ff., and notes by H. Oldenberg and A. B. Keith, *ib.*, 1909 p. 1095 ff., 1910 p. 464 ff.; cp. J. Wackernagel, *Altindische Grammatik*, pt. 1, p. 1 n., and references. Dr. Winckler has recently found the names of four Vedic deities, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra, and the Aśvins, on a cuneiform tablet from Boghaz Keui, the date of which is *circa* 1400 B.C., and in this fact support has been found for an argument for the extreme antiquity of the Vedic pantheon, and therefore of the Vedic ritual and literature. It is perhaps doubtful whether so far-reaching a conclusion is justified; 'it appears therefore quite clearly that in the fourteenth century B.C. and earlier the rulers of Northern Mesopotamia worshipped Vedic gods' (Jacobi, *l.c.*, p. 723, cp. V. Poussin, *Védisme*, p. 87 n.). The origin however of the worship which found its way to the west as well as into India must have been some centuries at least before this period. But the mention of the names of the gods does not necessarily imply the pre-existence of the form of culture known and preserved in India. See also A. H. Sayce, in *JRAS*, 1909, p. 1106 f.; J. Kennedy, *ib.*, p. 1107 ff. Deussen places the Brāhmaṇa period *c.* 1000–500 B.C. (*Philos.* I. i. p. 159 f.). The late Professor Max Müller distinguished four great periods of Sanskrit literary composition:—

(1) The *Sūtra* period, extending to about 600 B.C. 'Several of the most eminent among the authors of Sūtras or aphorisms lived prior, if not to the origin, at least to the spreading and the political ascendancy of Buddhism.'

(2) The *Brāhmaṇa* period, 600–800 B.C.

the deities of the Indians, and the Indo-Iranians also, should exhibit physical traits in their origin and be the scarcely veiled presentment of the agencies at work in the universe is not unnatural. For in the extreme zones of the earth much more than in the temperate, there has always been manifest the tendency to credit with consciousness

(3) The *Mantra* period, comprising the 'later sacrificial hymns, and the collection of these, together with the older hymns, into separate books, and afterwards into a complete body of sacred and liturgical poetry'; 800–1000 B.C.

(4) The *Chhandas* period, the last and most important of the four, being that in which the great *ri*shis lived and flourished; 1000–1200 B.C. *Circa* 1200 B.C. is therefore the latest date that can be assigned to the settlement of the Vedic poets in Northern India.

See Max Müller, *Rig-Veda*[2], Pref. to vol. iv., pp. vii. ff.; *History of Sanskrit Literature*[2], pp. 67–70, 572, and *passim*; *Physical Religion*, Lecture v. Most authorities consider that the limits here laid down are too narrow, and do not allow sufficient time for the development of thought and language. The periods moreover almost certainly overlap. Max Müller himself claimed nothing more for them than that they were approximations to the truth. Periods three and four pass into one another, and are incapable of any very precise differentiation.

Attempts have been made also to determine the age of these works by the help of astronomy. Among the latest of these are the researches of F. K. Ginzel, referred to in a note in the *Athenaeum* of September, 1894. It is there laid down that of four eclipses mentioned in the sacred books, three are to be probably identified with the eclipses of March 4, 1250 B.C., November 17, 1301 B.C., and May 26, 1386 B.C.; the last two of these were nearly, and the first quite total, presumably in the north of India. The earliest of the four is identified with an annular eclipse of October 5, 1978 B.C. The fact however that the central line of this eclipse crossed Southern India puts the identification practically out of court. Considering moreover the risks which beset the accurate transmission of numbers and dates, all such calculations and inferences are very precarious, even if reliance could always be placed on the original observations.

and life the external forces of the universe; there they seem to be effective on a vaster and more impressive scale. The poets of the Veda accordingly looked out upon the forces of nature by which they were encompassed, imagining each as living and sentient; and the more majestic and imposing the power displayed, the greater the god who wielded it. Thus of the more exalted gods in particular the attributes assigned to them betray immediately their origin; Agni burns, Indra thunders, and so forth. While, in addition to his own essential attribute or attributes, each divinity possesses a number of more general qualities, as greatness, majesty, knowledge, etc., which are, as it were, the common property of all. And according as the general or the particular element in the character of the god is emphasized by the poet, his distinct individuality is made to appear, or he is merged as it were in a crowd of gods from whom he is distinguished not in kind but only in degree. It was this feature undoubtedly in the presentation of the Vedic deities which facilitated the development of the thought that all the gods were but manifestations or forms of one god, and so ultimately pointed to monotheism. This step in advance, however, was never taken by the poets of the Rigveda, although indications and traces of the conception are found in later hymns. The actual development of the Indian religion, as far as it was based on the sacred books, followed other lines. To the authors the gods were and remained real, though they often seem hardly to be distinguished from the actual phenomena of nature in which they made themselves manifest.[1]

The most ancient of the gods is *Dyaus*, the

[1] Cp. *infra*, pp. 209, 212, 214 f.

personification of the heaven encompassing the earth (*pṛithivī*). With the latter he forms the primeval pair from which all things have their origin, and is invoked and worshipped as father of gods and men. *Dyaus* alone apparently is regarded as being without beginning, while all the other gods are begotten and mortal. He is the father in particular of *Indra*, the most popular and widely honoured divinity of the Veda, to whose praise more than two hundred and fifty hymns are dedicated, and who almost realises the character of a national god. He is a deity of the air, the mighty lord of the rain and the thunderstorm, the giver of good gifts when he sends his fertilising showers upon the burnt-up and thirsty soil; but also the terrible king, who commissions and guides the floods in their destructive course. He is chief of the gods, and became the warrior god, wielding the thunderbolt, and riding forth on his golden car, accompanied by the *Maruts*, the storm-deities,[1] sons of *Rudra*, lord of healing and of the arts. *Indra* is perhaps the most completely personified of the great divinities of the Veda. His appearance is described, and his vast size. He holds the earth in the hollow of his hand, spreads out and supports the sky, bestowing his bountiful gifts upon all who reverence him; and himself in turn revels in the offerings of his

Dyaus, Indra, Maruts

[1] The derivation of the Maruts from the clouds and storm-bursts has been disputed. They have been explained as vegetation spirits, *e.g.* by L. von Schroeder, *Mysterium und Mimas in Rigveda*, Leipzig, 1908, p. 124. They are however so closely connected with Indra that it is difficult to dissociate them from him in origin. In some passages they are called by the name of their father, the *Rudras*. See on the latter L. Poussin, *op. cit.*, p. 99 ff.

worshippers, especially the intoxicating drink of the Soma plant, in which he indulges to excess, and which strengthens him to go forth in terrible might, and to rout the opposing demons. The mythical combat in which he is most frequently engaged is with *Vritra*, the malignant demon of darkness and drought, whom he again and again defeats and slays. In the Avesta however Indra is himself a *daeva* or demon.

As the deity of the air and the winds *Indra* holds the second place in the earliest Vedic triad of gods, the other members of which are Agni and Sūrya. In later Hindu mythology he is almost altogether superseded and passes out of sight. The following are illustrations of hymns in his praise[1] :—

Thou, O Indra, with the swift Maruts, who break even through the stronghold, hast found even in their hiding-place the bright ones (days or clouds).

The pious singers (the Maruts) have, after their own mind, shouted towards the giver of wealth, the great, the glorious (Indra).

Mayest thou (host of the Maruts) be verily seen coming together with Indra, the fearless : you are both happy-making, and of equal splendour.

With the beloved hosts of Indra, with the blameless hasting (Maruts), the sacrificer cries aloud.

From yonder, O traveller (Indra), come hither, or from the light of heaven ; the singers all yearn for it ;—

Or we ask Indra for help from here, or from heaven, or from above the earth, or from the great sky.[2]

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[1] The translations except as otherwise noted are those of F. Max Müller and H. Oldenberg, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xxxii. and xlvi. ; to the former of whom especially students of Indian literature and religion, whether they agree with all his conclusions or not, owe an incalculable debt.

[2] *RV*. i. 6. 5 ff. ; *SBE*, vol. xxxii. p. 14 f.

O Indra, a thousand have been thy helps accorded to us, a thousand, O driver of the bays, have been thy most delightful viands. May thousands of treasures richly to enjoy, may goods come to us a thousandfold.

May the Maruts come towards us with their aids, the mighty ones, or with their best aids from the great heaven, now that their furthest steeds have rushed forth on the distant shore of the sea.

. . . . . .

No people indeed, whether near to us, or from afar, have ever found the end of your strength, O Maruts! The Maruts, strong in daring strength, have, like the sea, boldly surrounded their haters.

May we to-day, may we to-morrow in battle be called the most beloved of Indra. We were so formerly, may we truly be so day by day, and may the lord of the Maruts be with us.

May this praise, O Maruts, this song of Mândârya, the son of Mâna, the poet, ask you with food for offspring for ourselves! May we have an invigorating autumn, with quickening rain![1]

He who, immediately on his birth, the first, the wise, surpassed the gods in force; at whose might the two worlds shook, through the greatness of his strength, he, O men, is Indra.

He who fixed the quivering earth; who gave stability to the agitated mountains; who measured the vast atmosphere; who propped up the sky, he, O men, is Indra.

. . . . . .

He who has been a counterpart of the Universe; who casts down the unshaken, he, O men, is Indra.

. . . . . .

The sky and the earth bow down to him; at his might the mountains are afraid.[2]

O Indra, listen to our prayer; come, yoke thy horses and drive them to uswards: all mortals call upon thee in every place, but hear our prayer, O life-giver.

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[1] *RV.* i. 167; *SBE*, vol. xxxii. p. 272 f.

[2] *Rigveda*, ii. 12, 1, translated in Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, iv. p. 87. Cp. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 54–66; *Vedic Hinduism*, p. 26 ff.

> Thy greatness, Indra, reached our cry, and thou protectest the song of the singer, O mighty one: when thou dost take the thunderbolt in thy hand, great and fierce god, none can resist thee.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> On the days when evil men do penance for their sin, on these days be gracious to us, O Indra; the sins which Varuṇa, the wise god, sees in us—from their guilt may Indra deliver us.
>
> Let us call on this mighty Indra, that he may give us great wealth and substance: who is the hearer of prayer—and do you gods protect us always with your blessing.[1]

Soma

One of the most ancient deities, whose cult may be traced already in the Indo-Iranian period, was Soma, the Avestan Haoma. The name was applied both to the plant itself and to the fermented juice, the favourite intoxicating draught of Indra. The entire ninth book of the Rigveda, consisting of one hundred and fourteen hymns, is devoted to celebrating its virtues and power. It was the favourite libation to the gods, and had a mystical life in the third heaven. Like the nectar of the Greeks it was the drink of the gods, through partaking of which they became immortal; and men also will win immortality when they quaff the Soma in the abode of the blessed. In the representation of Soma there is less anthropomorphism than in that of Indra; and the consciousness appears never to have been entirely lost that the name denoted the actual plant and its sap or juice. This plant however was semi-mythical or divine; it grew in heaven as well as upon earth; and had indeed originally been brought down from the sky, a gift from the gods to men. Soma is termed a warrior and king, lord of plants and lord

[1] *RV*, vii. 28, transl. by Peterson, in *Hymns from the Rigveda*, i. p. 280 f.

of the wood. In the later literature the name is transferred to or identified with the moon, and of this identification there are certainly intimations, brief and obscure, in the Rigveda itself.[1] By some scholars however it is maintained that throughout the Veda, and from the very beginning, Soma is to be understood as referring to the moon. If this had been so, it is at least strange that all native commentators should have gone so entirely astray with respect to the meaning of the word. It does not seem to be certainly known what plant exactly is intended by the Soma. The so-called 'moon-plant,' *Asclepias Acida*, to which the name is sometimes applied, is said to have a bitter acrid juice, most unlikely to have been a popular beverage.[2]

In the tenth mandala, the latest book of the Rigveda, the praises of the Soma, and its irresistible power, are chanted in an unmistakeable drinking-song. Indra is the speaker :—

This, this is my thought, that I will get me cow and horse : have I not drunk the Soma ?

Like rushing winds the draughts I have drunk carry me along : have I not drunk the Soma ?

---

[1] The principal passages referred to are vi. 44, 21 ; viii. 71, 8 ; x. 85, 2 ff. ; 123, 8. In x. 85, 5 the moon is the cup from which the gods quaff the Soma, a conception that re-appears in the Upanishads. Cp. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 112 f. ; Monier-Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*, p. 12 f., and *Sanskrit Dict.*, *s.v.* Soma ; M. Bloomfield, *Religion of the Veda*, New York, 1908, pp. 77 f., 145 ff.

[2] See A. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie*, Breslau, 1891 ; cp. Macdonell, *ut supra* ; Barth, *Indian Antiquary*, xxiii. (1894) p. 364 ; L. de la Vallée Poussin, *Védisme*, p. 106 ff. In a brief article of much interest on the ninth mandala of the RV in *Actes du premier Congr. Intern. d'Hist. des Religions*, Paris, 1900, ii. 1 p. 49 ff., P. Regnaud expounds the view that the Soma was originally not an intoxicating drink, but the aromatic oil that fed the sacred fires, arguing mainly from the qualities of brilliance and usefulness ascribed to it.

The draughts carry me along as swift horses a chariot: have I not drunk the Soma?
Prayer is drawing nigh me, like a lowing cow approaching her dear child: have I not drunk the Soma?
I, as a carpenter with a plank, turn the prayer round in my heart: have I not drunk the Soma?
The two worlds reach not the half of me: have I not drunk the Soma?
Over heaven in my might, over this mighty earth I stretch: have I not drunk the Soma?
Ha! I will put earth down this way or that way: have I not drunk the Soma?

. . . . . .

I am great of the great; I have risen to the navel of the world: have I not drunk the Soma?
I have taken, and go away satisfied, to carry the offering to the gods: have I not drunk the Soma? [1]

Agni

If the number of hymns in which he is invoked is a safe criterion, *Agni*, the god of fire, the Latin *ignis*, was among the most popular and widely known of the Vedic deities. 'Hardly twenty individual deities are important enough in the *Rigveda* to have at least three entire hymns addressed to them.' [2] Agni takes the second place with about two hundred hymns, Indra and Soma being first and third. He is the son of heaven and earth, friend and protector of mankind; and is said to have had a threefold origin as the lightning in heaven, the kindled fire upon earth, and in the waters of the sky. He is therefore in himself a kind of primitive triad, a conception of the fire deity which has been fruitful in speculation and mythology. With the exception of the eighth and ninth, all the ten books of the Rigveda begin with a hymn in his praise. Together with Soma he is the only great

[1] *RV*, x. 119, Peterson, pp. 45 f., 291.

[2] Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

god of whom it may fairly be said that he has preserved in the main in the Veda his physical characteristics. The myths also that are related of him concern themselves more with his origin and functions than with his deeds. He has the right to claim from men reverence and fear, inasmuch as he attends upon them daily at the hearth, bears their sacrifices and offerings to heaven, gives them kindly warmth and makes their crops to grow. But the same beneficent power strikes and scorches in the lightning and the tropical sun those who oppose him and neglect to render him his due. Thus Agni was one of the first and greatest of the Vedic deities, the eldest of the gods, a priest and seer in heaven as well as on earth, messenger and intermediary between god and man, author and preserver, yet terrible to his foes as he rides in his flaming form on a golden car. If Indra is the type of the hero and warrior, Agni is the high-priest, uniting in himself the functions of all inferior and human priests, and making acceptable the worship and service of men to the gods. To him the opening hymn of the Rigveda is addressed :—

I magnify Agni, the Purohita,[1] the divine ministrant of the sacrifice, the Hotri priest, the greatest bestower of treasures.

Agni, worthy to be magnified by the ancient *Ri*shis and by the present ones,—may he conduct the gods hither.

May one obtain through Agni wealth and welfare day by day, which may bring glory and high bliss of valiant offspring.

Agni, whatever sacrifice and worship thou encompassest on every side, that indeed goes to the gods.

May Agni the thoughtful Hotri, he who is true and most splendidly renowned, may the god come hither with the gods.

[1] Household or family priest.

Whatever good thou wilt do to thy worshipper, O Agni, that (work) verily is thine, O Angiras.

Thee, O Agni, we approach day by day, O (god) who shinest in the darkness; with our prayer bringing adoration to thee—

Who art the king of all worship, the guardian of *Ṛitri*,[1] the shining one, increasing in thy own house.

Thus, O Agni, be easy of access to us, as a father is to his son. Stay with us for our happiness.[2]

O holy and divine Agni, with thy pleasant tongue of flame bring the gods here and worship them.

We have fed thee with butter, O glorious one, that gazest up into heaven: bring the gods to our feast.

Thou dost call them to our feast; we have kindled thee and thou dost shine: dost shine mightily, O wise Agni at our sacrifice.

Agni, come with all the gods and partake of our sacrifice: we have chosen thee for our priest.

See thy worshipper pours out the soma for thee, Agni, give him strength: with the gods sit down on the rushes.

Thou art kindled, O Agni, conqueror of thousands, and kindled dost further our sacrifice: a messenger to the gods, worthy to be praised.

Put Agni upon the altar, he to whom all creatures are known, who it is that carries our oblation: a god and priest ever young.[3]

Agni, thou art for ever the wise son of Heaven and of the Earth, the all-wealthy one. In thy peculiar way sacrifice here to the gods, O intelligent one!

Agni, the knowing, obtains (for his worshipper) heroic powers; he obtains (for him) strength, being busy for the sake of immortality. Bring then the gods hither, O (Agni), rich in food.

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[1] Fixed or settled order, law; the appropriate order of the sacrificial rite.

[2] *RV*, i. 1; *SBE*, vol. xlvi. p. l.

[3] *RV*, v. 26; Peterson, *Hymns from the Rigveda*, i. pp. 17, 276.

Agni, the wise, shines on Heaven and Earth, the two immortal goddesses who encompass all people—he who rules through his strength, and who is full of light through adoration.

Agni and Indra, come hither to the sacrifice in the house of the worshipper rich in pressed (Soma), never failing, ye two gods, at the drink of Soma.

Agni, thou art kindled in the house of the waters, (our) own (god), O son of strength, Jâtavedas, who exaltest the abodes (in which thou dwellest) by thy blessing.[1]

The following is a joint hymn to Agni and the Maruts :—

Thou art called forth to this fair sacrifice for a draught of milk ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

No god indeed, no mortal, is beyond the might of thee, the mighty one ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

. . . . . .

The strong ones who sing their song, unconquerable by force ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

They who are brilliant, of terrible designs, powerful and devourers of foes ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

They who in heaven are enthroned as gods, in the light of the firmament ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

They who toss the clouds across the surging sea ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

They who shoot with their darts (lightnings) across the sea with might ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni !

I pour out to thee for the early draught the sweet (juice) of Soma ; with the Maruts come hither, O Agni ![2]

Second only in importance to Indra, if indeed second to him, is *Varuṇa*, the Greek Οὐρανός, the

[1] *RV*, iii. 25, *SBE*, vol. xlvi. p. 291 ; cp. *Indian Wisdom*, p. 18.

[2] *RV*, i. 19, *SBE*, vol. xxxii. p. 53, and Peterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 1, 267 ; cp. Macdonell, p. 93 ff. ; Poussin, *Védisme*, p. 103 ff.

wide-spreading heavens,[1] in whom is embodied the ancient Indian conception of justice and right. Although the most completely personified of the Vedic deities, comparatively few hymns are directly addressed to him. These few, however, set forth with almost unequalled force his majesty and power. He is the moral ruler of the universe, omniscient and omnipresent, whose ordinances not even the gods may with impunity disregard; who is represented as possessing all the attributes of supreme authority and unerring righteousness, with power not only to judge but to execute his will, the maker of all and the preserver of all. Varuṇa sees all things, the future as well as the present and past, and calmly overlooks all in the quiet consciousness of strength, punishing the wrong-doer, but forgiving and merciful to the man who repents of his sin.[2] In all the hymns that bear his name there is found a prayer for forgiveness. He takes note of every action, 'far-sighted and thousand-eyed,' is acquainted with every thought; and his numberless messengers go to and fro throughout the whole universe. Of him it has been well said, if perhaps a little too strongly, that 'with Varuṇa the religion of the Veda goes down into the

Varuṇa

[1] The identity of Varuṇa and Οὐρανός has been disputed on philological grounds. The explanation, however, of the character and attributes of the former from the all-encompassing, all-surveying vault of heaven is independent of the equation of the names. These last also are probably part of a mythological inheritance received by Greeks and Indians from their common ancestral home, and are not merely similar by accident. Cp. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 75 ff., *Vedic Mythology*, p. 27 f.; V. Poussin, *Védisme*, p. 74 ff.; Max Müller, *Contributions to the Science of Mythology*, vol. i. p. 416 ff.

[2] Cp. *Manu*, ix. 245:—'Varuṇa is the lord of punishment, for he holds the sceptre even over kings.'—*SBE*, xxv. p. 385.

depths of the conscience, and realises the idea of holiness.[1] Certainly Varuṇa is the least earthly, the most heavenly of the Vedic deities; and in strong contrast with Indra, he is never made the subject of any myth or story. He is therefore pre-eminently the upholder of order, the lord of day and night and of the seasons in their regular succession, as distinguished from all that is disorderly and out of course. In the later mythology *Varuṇa* shares the fate of so many of the Vedic deities, and becomes reduced to comparative insignificance, in the character of a god of the sea,[2] his place and functions being taken over by Prajāpati.[3] The following is part of one of the best-known hymns addressed to him :—

> However we break thy laws from day to day, men as we are, O god, Varuṇa,
> Do not deliver us unto death, nor to the blow of the furious; nor to the anger of the spiteful!
> To propitiate thee, O Varuṇa, we bind thy mind with songs, as the charioteer a weary steed.
> Away from me they flee dispirited, intent only on gaining wealth; as birds to their nest.
> When shall we bring hither the man who is victory to the warriors, when shall we bring Varuṇa, the wide-seeing, to be propitiated?
>
> . . . . . .

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[1] Barth, *Religions of India*[2], p. 17.

[2] There is already a suggestion of Varuṇa as the ruler of the sea in *RV*, vii. 49 (Peterson, i. pp. 26, 281) :—

> The waters of the sky, the waters of the rivers, the waters of the wells : the bright and cleansing waters, whose goal is the sea—may these divine waters protect me.
> In the midst of them goes Varuṇa the king, marking the truth and falsehood of men : they so pure and bright, dropping honey—may these divine waters protect me.

[3] *infra*, p. 231.

He who knows the place of the birds that fly through the sky, who on the waters knows the ships,—
He, the upholder of order, who knows the twelve months, with the offspring of each, and knows the month that is engendered afterwards,[1]—
He who knows the track of the wind, of the wide, the bright, and mighty; and knows those who reside on high,—
He, the upholder of order, Varuṇa sits down among his people; he, the wise, sits there to govern.
From thence perceiving all wondrous things, he sees what has been and will be done.
May he, the wise son of time, make our paths straight all our days; may he prolong our lives!

. . . . . .

O hear this my calling, Varuṇa, be gracious now; longing for help, I have called upon thee.
Thou, O wise god, art lord of all, of heaven and earth: listen on thy way.[2]

Where are these old kindnesses of ours, when we walked together without hate[3]; when, O glorious Varuṇa, I entered thy great and holy house with its thousand doors?
I was thy close kinsman, Varuṇa, dear to thee, thy friend; but I have done evil against thee: I have sinned against thee; let me not suffer, O avenging God, defend me, for I call upon thee.
O Varuṇa, loose my bonds from me, and bring me to dwell in that abiding city: send me help from inner heaven—and do you gods always protect me with your blessing.[4]

In his *Indian Wisdom* the late Professor Monier-Williams gathered together in metrical form a number of the texts referring to this god. The passage is worth quoting, although of course it is a

[1] Explained as the thirteenth or intercalary month.

[2] *RV*, i. 25; Max Müller, *Sanskrit Literature*[2], p. 535 ff.; Peterson, i. pp. 2 ff., 267 ff.

[3] Peterson compares *Psalm* lxxxix. 49.

[4] *RV*, vii. 88; Peterson, i. pp. 36, 239 ff.

paraphrase rather than a translation, and moreover belongs to the Atharvaveda :—

The mighty Varuṇa, who rules above, looks down
Upon these worlds, his kingdom, as if close at hand.
When men imagine they do aught by stealth, he knows it.
No one can stand or walk or softly glide along,
Or hide in dark recess, or lurk in secret cell,
But Varuṇa detects him and his movements spies.
Two persons may devise some plot, together sitting
In private and alone; but he, the king, is there—
A third—and sees it all. This boundless earth is his,
His the vast sky, whose depth no mortal e'er can fathom.
Both oceans find a place within his body, yet
In that small pool he lies contained. Whoe'er should flee
Far, far beyond the sky, would not escape the grasp
Of Varuṇa, the king. His messengers descend
Countless from his abode—for ever traversing
This world and scanning with a thousand eyes its inmates.
Whate'er exists within this earth, and all within the sky,
Yea, all that is beyond, king Varuṇa perceives.
The winkings of men's eyes are numbered all by him.
He wields the universe, as gamesters handle dice.
May thy destroying snares, cast sevenfold round the wicked,
Entangle liars, but the truthful spare, O king! [1]

Solar Deities: Mitra

The solar deities of the Veda are of interest and importance less on account of the frequency with which they are invoked than because of the antiquity and widely spread character of their worship, and the rich mythology in which they are implicated. They represent, as elsewhere, rather the different aspects under which the warmth and power of the sun present themselves to men, than deities conceived as individually distinct. The most ancient of them all is *Mitra*, whose cult as

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 16; cp. Bloomfield, *Atharva-Veda*, *SBE*, vol. xlii. pp. 88, 389 f., where references are given to other translations of the same hymn.

well as name goes back to Indo-Iranian times, and who under the form of *Mithras* swayed so powerfully the nearer East and the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era. He is most frequently found in association with Varuṇa, in joint guardianship of the world, and only in one hymn is he addressed alone.[1]

Sūrya, Savitri, Vishṇu

The most prominent of the solar divinities, whose character is most clearly conceived and his attributes defined, is *Sūrya*, the son of Dyaus or the sky, to whom ten hymns of the Rigveda are dedicated. He is closely connected with Agni, as Mitra with Varuṇa, and is sometimes apparently identified with him. He is described as 'all-creating,' 'all-seeing,' his 'eye' surveys the universe, he proceeds on his daily course in a car drawn by seven steeds, and by his brightness drives away the demons of sickness and of the dark. Sometimes he is regarded with Indra and Agni as a member of a primitive triad, who rule respectively in the sky, the air, and on earth. Other solar deities are more correctly regarded as names or forms of Sūrya, under which he is invoked, as *Savitri*, the vivifier, who awakes the universe and men in the morning from sleep[2]; as *Vishṇu*, the all-pervader, who traverses the three worlds in three strides,[3] and who bears the standing epithet of

[1] Rigveda, iii. 59.

[2] Cp. the *Gāyatrī* verse, *infra*, p. 229.

[3] *Tripād*, in the Rigveda only apparently in x. 90, *trivikrama*. The origin and significance of the other epithets (*urukrama*, *urugāya*) are uncertain. They are usually supposed to refer to the rapid course of the sun through the three stages of rising, culmination, and setting. Cp. Macdonell, *Sanskr. Lit.*, p. 80 f., and *infra*, p. 351 ff.

'wide-going' or 'wide-stepping.' Of Vishṇu, indeed, little else is recorded, for he occupies in the older literature an altogether subordinate position, although destined to develop later into one of the most important and widely known of India's gods. Another form under which the sun is invoked is that of *Pūshan*, the guardian and preserver of cattle, the companion of travellers, and guide of the soul on its way to the lower world.[1]

These are the most important divinities of the Veda. It would be easy to extend the list. Others that do not there occupy so prominent a position are interesting because of their associations or subsequent history. *Vāyu* or *Vāta*, the wind, was another impersonation of the rain-storm, fabled to be the husband of the earth. *Bṛihaspati*, or *Brahmanaspati*, was the lord of prayer, divine priest of the gods like Agni, with whom indeed he is sometimes identified.[2] He intercedes for men with the gods, and protects the good against the wicked.

Bṛihaspati. Ushas, Aśvins

[1] It is perhaps merely accidental that a well-known Chinese god should hear the name of *Pu-hsien*. But it is at least interesting to note that according to the legend he made his way originally from India to China, travelling on an elephant, at or about the close of the third century of our era. In a temple on Mt. Omi there is a celebrated bronze image of Pu-hsien, seated on an elephant, which is ascribed to the seventh century. See A. J. Little, *Mount Omi and Beyond*, 1901, p. 63 ff., who states that the temple is ancient, and of a design 'utterly unlike anything Chinese.'

[2] *Bṛihaspati* is the only divinity in the Rigveda, other than in the late tenth book, who represents the personification of an abstract idea rather than a concrete force or phenomenon. Other similar personifications in the tenth book are *Prajāpati*, the lord of creatures (*infra*, p. 231), *Dhātṛi*, the creator, etc. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 100 f.

Ushas, Aurora, the dawn, receives praise in about twenty hymns. She is the daughter of heaven, ever bright and ever young. Borne on her car, she opens the gates of the sky, and keeps far away hurtful or malicious spirits. In her is seen perhaps the most attractive and beautiful personification to be found in the Veda. Other well-known deities are the *Aśvins*, twin gods of the morning, children of the sun, who have often been compared to the Dioscuri of Greece. In their honour more than fifty hymns are composed. They bestow gifts, and drive away sickness and ill from men. In later times accordingly they came to be worshipped as divine physicians. But their original nature and character have been much in dispute. The most probable view appears to be that they represent the morning and evening stars, conceived by primitive man to be separate and independent, but so evidently alike in their functions and course in the sky as to be regarded as twins.[1]

Lastly there is *Yama*, to whom only three hymns are addressed, the grim stern god of death, son of the sun, who though immortal chose to die, and having been the first to tread the road to the lower world was appointed its king. There he holds his court, and before him the souls of the dead appear and are judged according to their deeds. The good drink of the Soma and ascend into heaven, where they are themselves worshipped as gods under the name of *Pitris*,

Yama

[1] Others have thought that the *Aśvins* symbolized the morning and evening twilights, or even the sun and moon. See Macdonell, *Vedic Myth.*, p. 53. The word is properly an adjective, signifying 'belonging to horses.' The Aśvins are the two charioteers who conduct the car of the dawn through the sky. Cp. Poussin, *op. cit.*, p. 97 f.

fathers or ancestors. The wicked are hurled down into one of the twenty-one hells, in which they make expiation for their crimes. Those who believe that Yama also is a personification of some natural power or phenomenon hold that he represented the setting sun, or perhaps the day as it passed away into darkness. In the legends however of Yama, and the conception of his office, there seems to be a foreshadowing of the doctrine of metempsychosis, that so pervades and dominates all later Hindu religious belief.[1]

Demons also have their place in the Rigveda, especially *Vritra*, the great adversary of Indra. They are known collectively as *asuras*, 'spirits,' or *rakshasas*, 'demons,' the latter term denoting evil or malignant powers of the earth.

Tone and Character of Hymns

It may be worth while to add two or three more examples of these ancient hymns of the Veda. Many of them have been translated into English and other modern languages more than once, and the translations are easily accessible. No rendering however can adequately reproduce the combined dignity and terseness of the original. Their simplicity of conception often recalls the Iliad and Odyssey; but in beauty and warmth of expression they fall far behind Homer. On the other hand there is present in them a subtlety and originality of thought, scarcely to be matched in the ancient literature of any religion, and for the history of early religious thought they are of supreme importance. The following hymn is from the

[1] On Yama and his dogs cp. also Deussen, *Philosophie der Upanishads*, p. 288 f. (Eng. transl., p. 319 ff.). A 'funeral hymn' to Yama (*RV*, x. 14) is included in Peterson, i. pp. 38 ff., 247 ff.

sixth mandala of the Rigveda, addressed to Soma and Rudra :—

> Soma and Rudra, may you maintain your divine dominion, and may the oblations reach you properly. Bringing the seven treasures to every house, be kind to our children and our cattle.
>
> Soma and Rudra, draw far away in every direction the disease which has entered our house. Drive far away Nirṛiti,[1] and may auspicious glories belong to us !
>
> Soma and Rudra, bestow all these remedies on our bodies. Tear away and remove from us whatever evil we have committed, which clings to our bodies.
>
> Soma and Rudra, wielding sharp weapons and sharp bolts, kind friends, be gracious unto us here ! Deliver us from the snare of Varuṇa, and guard us as kind-hearted gods ![2]

Hymns of the Creation

The tenth book of the Rigveda, though later in date than the others, contains some of the most interesting compositions. The 129th hymn has been termed the 'Hymn of the Creation,' and is thus translated or paraphrased by Sir Monier Monier-Williams :—

> In the beginning there was neither nought nor ought,
> Then there was neither sky nor atmosphere above.
> What then enshrouded all this teeming Universe ?
> In the receptacle of what was it contained ?
> Was it enveloped in the gulf profound of water ?
> Then there was neither death nor immortality,
> Then there was neither day, nor night, nor light, nor darkness.
> Only the Existent One breathed calmly, self-contained.
> Nought else than him there was—nought else above, beyond.
> Then first came darkness hid in darkness, gloom in gloom.
> Next all was water, all a chaos indiscreet,

[1] Goddess of destruction.

[2] *RV*, vi. 74 ; *SBE*, vol. xxxii., p. 434.

In which the One lay void, shrouded in nothingness.
Then turning inwards he by self-developed force
Of inner fervour and intense abstraction grew.
And now in him Desire, the primal germ of mind,
Arose, which learned men, profoundly searching, say
Is the first subtle bond, connecting Entity
With Nullity. This ray that kindled dormant life,
Where was it then? before? or was it found above?
Were there parturient powers and latent qualities,
And fecund principles beneath, and active forces
That energized aloft? Who knows? Who can declare?
How and from what has sprung this Universe? the gods
Themselves are subsequent to its development.
Who then can penetrate the secret of its rise?
Whether 'twas framed or not, made or not made; he only
Who in the highest heaven sits, the omniscient lord,
Assuredly knows all, or haply knows he not.[1]

A similar hymn, the 90th of the tenth mandala, embodying curious speculation on the origin of the universe from the primeval man *Purusha*, is given in a literal prose translation by Dr. J. Muir :—

Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. On every side enveloping the earth, he overpassed (it) by a space of ten fingers. Purusha himself is this whole (universe), whatever has been and whatever shall be. He is also the lord of immortality, since (or, when) by food he expands. Such is his greatness, and Purusha is superior to this. All existences are a quarter of him; and three-fourths of him are that which is immortal in the sky. . . . When born he extended beyond the earth, both behind and before. When the gods performed a sacrifice with Purusha as the oblation, the spring was its butter, the summer its fuel, and the autumn its (accompanying) offering. This victim, Purusha, born in the beginning, they immolated on the sacrificial grass. . . . From that universal sacrifice sprang the *ri*ch and sāman verses, the metres, and the yajush. From it sprang horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth; kine sprang from it; from it goats and sheep. When (the gods) divided Purusha, into how many parts did they cut him up? what was his mouth? what

[1] *Indian Wisdom*[2], p. 22 f.

arms (had he)? what (two objects) are said (to have been) his thighs and feet? The Brâhman was his mouth; the Râjanya was made his arms; the being (called) the Vaiśya, he was his thighs; the Śûdra sprang from his feet. The moon sprang from his soul, the sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth, and Vâyu from his breath. From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the (four) quarters: in this manner (the gods) formed the worlds.[1]

Hymn to the Unknown God

A further hymn of great interest is the 'Hymn to the Unknown God':—

In the beginning there arose the Golden Child (Hiraṇya-garbha); as soon as born, he alone was the lord of all that is. He stablished the earth and this heaven:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He who gives breath, he who gives strength, whose command all the bright gods revere, whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He who through his might became the sole king of the breathing and twinkling world, who governs all this, man and beast:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

. . . . . .

He through whom the awful heaven and the earth were made fast, he through whom the ether was stablished, and the firmament; he who measured the air in the sky:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by his will, look up, trembling in their mind; he over whom the risen sun shines forth:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

. . . . . .

He who by his might looked even over the waters which held power (the germ) and generated the sacrifice (light), he who alone is God above all gods:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

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[1] *Original Sanskrit Texts*[3], vol. i. p. 8 ff.; Peterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 41 ff., 258 ff.

May he not hurt us, he who is the begetter of the earth, or he the righteous, who begat the heaven; he who also begat the bright and mighty waters:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?[1]

Finally may be quoted the *Gāyatrī*, or *Sāvitrī* (*Manu*, ii. 78–82, 148, because addressed to Savitṛi), the brief formula of supplication on the lips of every Brāhman in India in his daily prayers:— **Gāyatrī**

On the surpassing splendour of that divine Vivifier let us meditate; and may he enlighten our minds.[2]

The number of gods and goddesses thus invoked, the deified forms and powers of nature in her changing moods, is indefinitely great. They have been variously estimated by native writers as from thirty-three to upwards of a million, and the millions are popularly multiplied indefinitely.[3] To reckon up their names and titles alone would be a serious task; and would afford no **Number and Interrelation of Gods**

[1] *RV*, x. 121; *SBE*, vol. xxxii. pp. 1, 2; Peterson, i. pp. 46 ff., 271 ff. Cp. Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Philosophie*, i. 1 p. 128 ff., who regards the hymn as an imitation of an earlier hymn to Indra (ii. 12), perhaps designedly substituting in a mystical sense the 'Unknown God' for the personal object of an idolatrous and unworthy worship.

[2] *Tat Savitur vareṇyam bhargo devasya dhīmahi, dhiyo yo naḥ praćodayāt. RV*, iii. 62, 10. Macdonell, *Sanskr. Lit.*, p. 79, translates:—'May we attain that excellent glory of Savitṛi the god, that he may stimulate our thoughts.'

[3] The number 33 is given in *RV*, viii. 30. 2; and in i. 139. 11 these are triply divided 'eleven in heaven, eleven on earth, and eleven in the waters.' Elsewhere the number is 3,306 (x. 6. 3), or 3,339 (iii. 9. 9); cp. Monier-Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*[4], p. 417 note. The Atharvaveda (xi. 5. 2) has 6,333; cp. Deussen, *op. cit.*, p. 279 and note.

safe guide to the real number of the divinities, since each god makes his appearance under different names. They interchange with one another with almost Protean rapidity. Now one and now another seems to be supreme, and invests himself with all the powers and dignities of the rest; only to sink again into a second or lower place, as another claimant to sovereign rank comes forward.[1] There is no settled hierarchy, no fixed and acknowledged gradation of authority. All is floating, liable to change. The one god for the moment addressed by the poet is regarded apparently as so near and so great as to exclude or dwarf all the others; then himself in turn retires into the background. And in this variety, uncertainty, want of definiteness of agreement or of outline, it is easy to recognise the features of a young religion, the childhood of a nature worship, with the beauty and elasticity of childhood; a religious belief however which has not yet gained a position of stability or laid down for itself strict lines of development, upon which it shall steadily and consistently proceed.

Polytheism and Monotheism of the Vedic Hymns

In the presence therefore of a mythology so rich in the number of its personifications, and at the same time so simple and transparent in its character, it is natural to qualify the religious beliefs of the men of the Vedic age as polytheistic, and their cult as pure nature worship. And such in the majority of instances it undoubtedly was. To the ordinary suppliant the different names of

[1] Cp. Max Müller, *Sanskrit Literature*[2], p. 533:—'It would be easy to find, in the numerous hymns of the Veda, passages in which almost every single god is represented as supreme and absolute.'

deities represented distinct deities, endowed with various qualities beneficent or the reverse, and with the will and ability to control, or at least influence, his life. There are not wanting, however, in some of the hymns traces of a more elevated and refined conception, indicative of a wider range of thought, which seem to have set itself on the way to monotheism; which implied that in some dim undefined manner, even so early as this, the numerous gods of whom mention is made were intended by the poets themselves, and were understood by their hearers or readers, to be but adumbrations of the reality, the manifold forms in which the one supreme being, invisible intangible inapprehensible, clothed himself in order that he might declare his name and his nature unto men. In the later hymns especially there is presented such a mysterious personality, of whom the poet speaks without definition, and without characterisation, the embodiment of an idea and an abstraction rather than a personal god clothed with attributes; one who passed under many names, as *Hiranyagarbha* the golden embryo, *Svayambhū* the self-existent one, *Viśvakarman* the maker of all things, and especially *Prajāpati* the lord of creatures. On the other hand it would seem that the thought of one God alone and supreme, who manifests himself in varying forms, is in any broad or general sense the creation of a later age, and is altogether alien to the simplicity and directness of an early faith. The evidence for such a belief amongst the peoples who lived in India in this the dawn of history is uncertain, and rests to a great extent upon doubtful inference and interpretation. And there is therefore hardly sufficient ground for rejecting the *primâ facie* and natural conclusion from the

mention of many gods, that for the most part the people did actually worship all these separate divinities.

It may justly be said therefore, that the men of Vedic times were to a certain extent both polytheists and monotheists, the majority inclining strongly to the more external and mechanical faith. The two forms of belief however were not felt to be inconsistent with one another, and ideas which appear to a Western mind to be contradictory or mutually exclusive were found to be by no means so in practice. The apparent incompatibility of the worship of the one and the many presented no hardship to Oriental thought. Nor is it difficult to understand how a twofold tendency should exist; a tendency which, starting always from a personification of the natural forces of the universe, moved on the one hand towards the broad pantheism of later times, which identified everything with God; and on the other, in the direction of a purer loftier creed, which with deeper more spiritual reflection and insight represented to itself all these external and visible things as but manifestations of the one supreme unknowable Lord.[1] Thus the mass of the people, as in India to-day, were polytheists, nature worshippers; the few amongst the poets and elsewhere, raised the question as to the origin of these powers of nature, the birth and apparition of this crowd of gods, if gods they were, and endeavoured to solve the great problem, Whence come we and the world in which

[1] Cp. *Brihadāranyaka Upanishad*, i. 4, 6:—'When they say, "Sacrifice to this or sacrifice to that god," each god is but his manifestation, for he is all gods.' Of this latter tendency the philosophy and theology of the Upanishads were the outcome and logical conclusion.

we live? The germs of almost all the later developments of Indian speculation are to be found in the Veda among the rest, that which goes back in vague and ever-increasing abstraction, through ranks upon ranks of divinities, until it ends in paradox and mystery, the great Unknown.

The poet moreover, who invested with all the attributes of supreme dignity and power the god whom at the moment he was addressing, and expressly subordinated all others to him, was virtually and for the time being a monotheist, although the object of his monotheistic worship might and in fact did vary. He paid homage to one god in the most comprehensive and exclusive manner. But his preoccupation with this divinity, though complete, was temporary, and as it were for an especial purpose; at another time and under other circumstances he was free to offer the same devotion, and to present the same prayer and praise to another deity, or to one who at least bore another name; who then was to him in power and majesty all that the former had been. Such an attitude of mind has been aptly termed henotheistic or kathenotheistic,—the worship of the one, although the existence of the many is not denied. And it is by no means peculiar to the ancient Vedic seers.[1] Logically such a tendency should lead the way to a

Henotheism

[1] M. Cumont, for example, in a chapter of much interest describes the interchange of attributes and gradual accumulation of functions which took place among the ancient deities of Syria and the West, illustrating the same tendency of thought and worship (*Religions Orientales dans le Paganisme Romain*, Paris, 1906, ch. v.). It may be traced in ancient Babylonia, complicated there, as in the case of Semitic beliefs in general, by local and political influences, and the strength of local cults. Cp. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

real monotheism, one deity out of the many, the object of the most frequent and sincere and comprehensive worship, gradually accumulating in himself all divine attributes, and permanently maintaining the place and rights that at first were only occasionally accorded to him. In India however this final step was never taken. Vedic religion came under other influences, and developed on different lines. And the higher theistic faiths of India owed their origin and impulse in the main to religious forces which were independent of the ancient Brāhmanic faith or of the Vedic writings.

Ritual

Of the ritual and ceremonial observance which is presupposed by the Vedic hymns no detailed description can be given. Minutely elaborate and carefully guarded in later times, the worship was probably simple enough in form in the earliest ages. The offerings made to the gods chiefly consisted of melted butter, curds, rice, cakes, etc., with the Soma juice mingled with milk poured out as a libation morning, noon, and evening. These were consumed in the fire, which was conceived as bearing them to heaven. Animal sacrifices also were presented, buffaloes, cows, rams, or goats, but especially the horse. The *Aśvamedha*, or sacrifice of a hundred horses, was the most powerful means of approaching the gods; and by it rightly performed the sacrificer became the equal of Indra himself, the ruler of the heavens. Some writers also have believed that they found traces of the practice of human sacrifice in the Veda. The inference is a very precarious one, drawn from hints and descriptions which were probably never intended to be literally understood. Upon these offerings the gods are represented as eagerly feeding, Indra especially delighting himself in the Soma

drink; and by them they are strengthened for their daily labours in resisting the attacks of the demons. It is by the draught of Soma moreover that they win, as do men, immortality. And in this respect also, that having been created they are by nature mortal and subject to decay and death, the anthropomorphic character of the conception formed of the gods is shown.

Of pre-eminent importance moreover was the invocation or prayer, with which every offering was accompanied. In the uttered word there lay a secret spell or energy, which gave to the act of worship its efficacy, and without which the sacrifice was incomplete and valueless.[1] Hence *Vāć*, sacred speech, is personified in the Veda, and is represented as the wife of Prajāpati. By the power of *Vāć*, the sacrificer obtained the benefits he desired, not excepting the destruction of his foes. In the later literature *Vāć* is identified with *Sarasvatī*, the goddess of learning. This subtle, almost magical energy subsisting in the formula employed or the mantra spoken was termed *brahman*, a word often used in the Veda to signify prayer, hymn, or even spell; and which has had a long and interesting history. Derived probably from a root *vrih* or *brih*, meaning to grow, increase, it indicates properly the religious feeling of reverence or devotion, as growing and developing within the soul, and later the outward expression of this devotion in prayer

Prayer: Brahman

[1] *RV*, i. 187:—'Without Brahmanaspati sacrifice does not succeed'; cp. Westermarck, *Moral Ideas*, ii. p. 620 f., who regards sacrifice as in many instances in primitive intention and practice a 'conductor of imprecations,' and quotes many examples. See also especially of the later hymns, *RV*, x. 31, translated and discussed in Deussen i. 1, p. 139 ff.

or hymn of praise. This is one of the explanations of the term given by Sāyaṇa, the great native commentator on the Veda.[1] The word is then employed to denote a sacred text or *mantram* used as an adjuration to dispel evil influences, or a formula for securing good. Especially is it used for the sacred syllable *Om*, of which Manu writes,

[1] The derivation of the word is not certain; cp. Hillebrandt in *ERE*, vol. ii. *s.v.*, who quotes from Sāyaṇa seven different interpretations, all of which, with the exception of the first, he regards as more or less justified by the usage of the term in the Rigveda itself. In the judgement of the author of the article the original significance of *brahman* was 'magic,' 'witchcraft,'—'its origin is to be sought in a primitive and rude stratum of human thought, from which it was gradually developed into an expression for the loftiest conception formulated by Hinduism,' p. 797. The view however maintained by many scholars that all religion begins with magic is very far from being established. Cp. also on the signification and history of the word Deussen, *op. cit.*, p. 240 ff., who quotes from the St. Petersburg lexicon seven meanings of the word,—prayer, magical spell or formula, sacred speech, sacred knowledge (Veda), right behaviour (*keuschheit*, chastity), the absolute, the sacred caste (i.e. the Brāhmans). 'Prayer' however, in the Indian sense, is to be conceived not as petition, but as the mystical exaltation of feeling and thought in communion with the Divine; cp. especially the passages quoted or referred to on p. 243. See also Monier-Williams, *Sanskr. Dict.*, *s.v.*, Barth, pp. 38, 44, and the references in *ERE*, ii. p. 799, *SBE*, vol. l. p. 106 ff. Cp. K. S. Geldner, *Der Rigveda in Auswahl*, 1ste theil, p. 122 f., who regards as the primary significance of the word the ecstatic emotion or exaltation of feeling experienced in communion with the gods. Bṛihaspati or Brahmanaspati is properly the 'lord of Brahman,' or prayer. Sāyaṇa was a native of the south of India, who lived in the fourteenth century of our era, and the younger brother of Mādhava, the author of the *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*, a summary or epitome of sixteen philosophical systems (*infra*, p. 320). Cp. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 275 f.; Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*[2], p. 127 note; C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India*, p. 223; J. Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, Strassburg, 1896, pp. 4, 33.

'The monosyllable (Om) is the highest Brahman.'[1] It is then further extended to signify in general the inspired word, the sacred text, the Veda itself. From this meaning of the sacred text it passed to its contents, religious knowledge or theology, especially the higher theoretical or speculative wisdom as opposed to the lower and practical, the merely external life of works of the unenlightened lay worshipper or the mendicant, which at its best consisted only in formal observances, or in self-mortification and austerities. And finally, in its loftiest most abstract signification, the word was used to express the great object of religious knowledge, Brahma, the self-existent supreme being, from whom all souls come and to whom all souls return. Nor does this brief outline by any means exhaust all the ideas conveyed by the term, or trace to their issues the various ramifications connected with it. In truth the conception of prayer as a kind of magical invocation, possessing magical power, is one of the most ancient and highly elaborated in Vedic literature.[2]

Sacrifice

The sacrifice thus offered and accompanied was primarily at least regarded as of the nature of a ransom, or a price paid for an expected benefit. The sacrificer presented something to the gods in order to obtain from them in return a gift, the fulfilment of his wish. This is sometimes expressed plainly

[1] *Manu*, ii. 83.

[2] Cp. *Manu*, ii. 85:—'An offering, consisting of muttered prayers, is ten times more efficacious than a sacrifice performed according to the rules (of the Veda); (a prayer) which is inaudible (to others) surpasses it a hundred times, and the mental (recitation of sacred texts) a thousand times.'—*SBE*, xxv. p. 45 f.

and without disguise, as in the invocation to Indra, 'Give to me, and I will give to thee; bring to me, and I will bring to thee,'[1] or in more forcible if coarser fashion, 'Here is butter, give us cows.'

In the first instance therefore the Vedic conception of sacrifice was entirely simple and inartificial. The sacrificial act however was also in a loftier and more spiritual sense of a mystical nature, with an inherent virtue so great and indispensable that on the continuance and right performance of sacrifice depended the whole course of nature.[2] Were the offerings to cease, the rain would not fall, the sun shine, or the crops grow. Even the gods were begotten of sacrifice, and derived all their strength from the food and gifts provided by their worshippers. They are themselves represented as offering sacrifice; although it is not said to whom. By the power of sacrifice they in the beginning rescued the world from chaos, and by the same power prevent it from falling back into confusion. The dismemberment of the primeval man Purusha was the first act of sacrifice.[3] Sometimes also in an excess of refinement, since the gods themselves are thus dependent on sacrifice, it is concluded that sacrifice must have existed antecedent even to the gods. And the climax of paradox and extravagance seems to be reached when the Supreme, the Self-Existent One, is represented as sacrificing himself in order to create. Thus the idea of sacrifice, from a definite and natural origin, became exceedingly complex, and gave rise to elaborate methods of ritual and symbolical observance, accompanied by myths

[1] Cp. Barth, p. 35 ff., with references.

[2] Macdonell, pp. 73, 182 f.; Hopkins, *Religions of India*, pp. 60, 149; cp. Westermarck, *Moral Ideas*, ii. p. 611 f.

[3] *RV*, x. 90; *supra*, p. 227 f.

and types and legends of the most varied character.[1]

With regard to the ethical and moral practice of Vedic times no very definite evidence is available. Ritual and sacrifice, with praise and prayer to the gods, occupied the attention of the authors of the hymns, and but little information is conveyed by them on the subject of the duties and relations of man to God in moral behaviour and life, or on the obligations which the writers acknowledged towards their fellow men. It would seem as though the external circumstances of a strenuous physical life so entirely dominated and conditioned their thought that little time or space was left for ethical rule or principle. The few details that can be learnt are rather matter of inference than actual statement of fact. By some scholars a very high tone of morality has been claimed for these early settlers by the Indus and on the plains of the Panjāb. Little positive evidence however is available. It is noticeable that the hymns acknowledge no evil divinities. All if not actively good are at least neutral. Rudra is perhaps the only exception to the generally beneficent nature of the early gods of the Veda. Evil-working demons indeed exist, whose powers are exercised for evil and malicious ends; but as yet these are not gods. It seems fair therefore to conclude that on the whole, as would naturally be expected to be the case, the

Ethics of the Veda

[1] It is interesting to note that the idea of a self-sacrifice on the part of the deity in order to establish the universe in its order is not confined to ancient India. Dr. Frazer quotes an early Mexican legend to the same effect, the object being to set the sun on his course (*Lectures on the Kingship*, 1905, p. 103). Cp. the statement of the Jewish Rabbis that God Almighty Himself prays; J. Abelson, *Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature*, pp. 39, 122 f.

moral character of the worshipper is reflected in the moral character of the deities he worshipped, the creations of his own fancy.

The hymns however declare with much reiteration the obligations of service under which men lie to the gods, and the reality and closeness of the ties by which they are bound to this service. A sacrifice offered without sincerity and purity of heart will not be acceptable. Apart from *śraddhā*, faith, all gifts and prayers are unavailing. On the duty of man to man in the relations of ordinary life but few inferences appear to be justified. In one passage at least kindness towards the suffering and needy is enjoined; elsewhere witchcraft and idolatry are denounced, and men are exhorted to live in harmony one with another. On the other hand there are not wanting traces of a darker faith and of usages prevalent always and such as we should expect to find amongst a primitive nature-loving people,—habits of demon worship, sorcery, incantations, with all the licentiousness and cruelty which are wont to accompany savage credulity and ignorance. Such practices are in general quietly ignored or judiciously kept in the background by the Vedic poets, the advocates of a more refined and elevating cult. Doubtless there were good and evil tendencies amongst the early settlers in India, noble and ignoble lives. The loftier aspirations and longings found expression in words and songs that have survived; the lower and less reputable were ignored as far at least as the literature was concerned.[1] In the hymns of the Rigveda therefore ritual was the chief thing. And man achieved his

[1] The Atharvaveda of course is the chief exception,—the *vade-mecum* of the spell-workers and the mystery men; *supra*, p. 202 ff.

supreme end and aim in the worship of the gods in the appointed way of sacrifice and prayer.

The early poets of the Veda reflected much about the beginnings of all things, the constitution and government of the universe. They endeavoured to discover the secrets of the ages past, and framed theories to account for the origin of the world and of the gods themselves. But with regard to the future and a possible life to come very little is said; and as far as the Rigveda is concerned the few statements that are made are for the most part contained in the late tenth book. There is no consistent or reasoned eschatology in the Vedic hymns. Often as the writers have asked themselves and tried to answer the question, Whence? the question which fills so large a place in the later speculations and literature, Whither, appears but little if at all to have occupied their attention. Chiefly in the legends concerning Yama, the god of death, there is to be found what information is available with regard to Vedic beliefs concerning a future existence. These legends also belong almost entirely to the last book, and the latest period of the age of the hymns. There is no suggestion of a doctrine of transmigration, or of a renewed earthly life. The good after death dwell in felicity with the gods, and become immortal by drinking of the Soma. As to the future destiny of the wicked more reticence is observed. Apparently Indra is the minister of punishment, and hurls them down into darkness, where they suffer the penalty for their disregard of the gods. It was upon the needs of the present that the thought of the seer for the most part concentrated itself, and the possibilities or requirements of the future filled but a small place in his regard.

Eschatology

THE BRĀHMANAS

Contents and Date

From the consideration of the hymns of the Veda it is natural to pass to the *Brāhmaṇas*, those portions of the Vedic writings which are devoted to the explanation of the sacrifices and ceremonies, and to the laying down rules for ritual observance. They are in effect doctrinal and practical treatises, guide-books to those whose duty it was to know and to carry out the sacred rites of the gods. But they further occupy themselves with mystical and philosophical expositions, and record strange legends and traditions, which reappear in greater detail and with added marvels in the later literature. With the exception of a few parts in metre, perhaps of earlier date,[1] they are all written in prose.

Clearly to define the subject-matter of the *Brāhmaṇas* was a difficulty to the ancient Indian commentators themselves.[2] The title in itself

[1] Wackernagel, *Altind. Gr.*, i. p. xxxi. f.

[2] Various definitions are suggested by Sāyaṇa, who is quoted by Max Müller, *Sanskrit Literature*[2], p. 342 ff. :—'The only means by which Mantras can be distinguished from Brāhmaṇas lies in their general sacrificial appellation, which comprehends the most different things under the one common name of Mantras. . . . Knowing, however, that the Veda consists only of two parts, we may say that whatever does not come under the name of Mantra is Brāhmaṇa, whether it contain reasons, explanations, censures, recommendations, doubts, commandments, relations, old stories, or particular determinations. Not one of these subjects belongs to the Brāhmaṇas exclusively, but they occur more or less frequently in the Mantras also, and could therefore not be used as definitions of the Brāhmaṇas.' This is not very satisfactory. Professor Tiele writes of them :—'The Brāhmaṇas contain here and there occasional elevated thoughts, and not a few antique traditions of the highest importance, but they are in other respects marked by narrow formalism,

denotes merely that they are appropriate to or the possession of the Brāhmans. In part they are hardly to be distinguished from the earlier *mantra*; and at the other extreme, they shade off into the later *Āranyakas*,[1] which are religious hand-books for the use of or composed by devotees in the forest, and into the philosophical *Upanishads*.[2] Their date also, and order of succession, it is not easy to determine. That they are subsequent to the hymns is proved by the constant use they make of these, and by the fact that they apply themselves to the explanation of the mantras.[3] Some of the oldest are assigned to the seventh or eighth century B.C.; others, and probably the majority, are considerably later. The period 800–500 B.C. is generally accepted as the Brāhmaṇa era of Sanskrit literature; but almost certainly these limits are too narrow. In particular the composition of works in the spirit of the Brāhmaṇas was carried on at a much less remote age. Details however are uncertain, authorities differ, and a relative not an absolute dating is often all that is attainable.[4]

childish mysticism, and superstitious talk about all kinds of trifles, such as may be expected where a pedantic and power-loving priesthood is invested with unlimited spiritual authority.' —*Outlines of the History of Religion*[5] (1892), p. 123.

[1] *infra*, p. 254 f.

[2] Cp. Macdonell, *Sankr. Lit.*, p. 202 ff., who, following Sāyaṇa, classifies their contents as *vidhi*, practical rules for the sacrifice, *arthavāda*, explanations or exegesis, and *upanishad*.

[3] See Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, i.[3] p. 3, and the commentator there cited :—'Although the Veda is formed both of Mantra and Brāhmaṇa, yet as the Brāhmaṇa consists of an explanation of the Mantras, it is the latter which were at first recorded.'

[4] Criteria derived from the grammatical structure of the language and the accentual practice have also been employed to determine the relative age of the extant Brāhmaṇas. The

Extant Brāhmaṇas

To each Saṁhitā therefore or collection of hymns one or more Brāhmaṇas was attached, applied especially to the exposition of the appropriate ceremonial, and the instruction of the priests to whose school or cult it belonged. Their relation to the Saṁhitās has often been compared to that of the Talmud to the canonical books of the Old Testament, or the Muhammadan Sunnat to the Qur'ān. The illustration must not be pressed; inasmuch as the Brāhmaṇas are equally S'ruti, revealed truth, and are acknowledged to stand on the same level of inspiration and authority with the hymns themselves. The most important are the *Aitareya*, and to a less degree the *Kaushītaki* or *S'āṅkhāyana*, belonging to the Rigveda. Both of these are occupied chiefly with the Soma sacrifice; the former however adds details with regard to the duties of the king and the *purohita* or family priest, and relates one of the best-known legends of ancient India, the story of S'unahśepha, which has been supposed to prove that the early Āryans practised human sacrifice.[1] The latter includes directions for the regular morning and evening offerings, and those

differences however are not strongly marked, and the character of the language employed is on the whole uniform. Cp. esp. Wackernagel, *Altind. Grammat.*, i. p. xxix. ff., who concludes that the oldest are the Tāṇḍya and Taittirīya. Later are the Aitareya, Kaushītaki, and Talavakāra, the last-named being the earliest of these three. With these is to be classed the S'atapatha, which is however more recent than the Aitareya. Latest of all are the Gopatha and the lesser treatises belonging to the Sāmaveda.

[1] *Aitar. Br.*, vii. 13–18; the original text is given, *e.g.* in Max Müller, *Anc. Sanskr. Liter.*[2], ii. p. 572 ff., and a translation, *ib.*, p. 408 ff. Cp. *Rāmāyaṇa*, i. 61, 62; Monier-Williams, *Sanskr. Dict.*, *s.v.*; Macdonell, p. 207 f.; etc.

appointed for the times of the new and full moon. With the Black Yajurveda is associated the *Taittirīya* Brāhmaṇa, and with the White the *Śatapatha* Brāhmaṇa, the Brāhmaṇa of the Hundred Paths, which is the most detailed and interesting of these books in regard to the early ritual and practice of the Vedic priests.[1]

Although in its present form more recent than some of the others, there can be no doubt that the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa has preserved much in relation to the observance and interpretation of the ritual that is of great antiquity. The Indian legend of the deluge is found here in its earliest form,[2] and terms of the Sāṅkhya philosophy and of Buddhism which later acquired a technical connotation are employed with ordinary non-technical meanings. There are two recensions extant, belonging to the two schools of the Mādhyandinas and the Kānvas, the former comprising fourteen books, the latter seventeen. The first nine books of the Mādhyandina recension are regarded as the oldest portion of the work, and as the nucleus to which the others were attached. The main subject of which they, together with the tenth chapter, treat is the construction and ritual of the fire-altar. Books xi. to xiii. inclusive are of the nature of summary and supplement, and the fourteenth or last book is the Āraṇyaka. Two teachers of pre-eminent authority and fame are introduced, Yājñavalkya[3] in books i.–v., xi. ff., and Śāṇḍilya in books vi.–x. inclusive. The former apparently is more closely associated with the central and north-eastern districts, especially with the country of Videha and its ruler Janaka; the latter with the north-west. The difference of names is supposed to indicate a different authorship of the two groups of books, which were then finally combined and edited in the district east or north-east of Madhyadeśa, where the authority of Yājñavalkya was most fully recognised.

The Brāhmaṇas of the Sāmaveda also belong to

[1] Cp. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 212 ff.; *SBE*, vols. 12, 26, 41, 43, 44.

[2] *infra*, p. 246 f.

[3] *infra*, p. 261

two schools, those of the Taṇḍins and of the Talavakāras or Jaiminīyas. The Tāṇḍya or Pañćaviṁśa of the former is, with the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa of the Taittirīya Yajurveda, the oldest of the Brāhmaṇas. It makes provision for the ritual of the Soma sacrifice and at sacred streams. The Shaḍviṁśa, belonging to the same school, but of a considerably later date, is in regard to its contents supplementary to the Tāṇḍya, and is largely mystical and speculative.[1] Finally of the Atharvaveda there is the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, of comparatively recent date. In part it is dependent upon the S'atapatha Brāhmaṇa, from which it borrows. In the judgement of some scholars also it attaches itself more particularly to the Paippalāda recension of the AV[2] and according to Professor Macdonell belongs altogether rather to the post-Vedic age.[3]

It is not necessary to add many illustrative extracts from the Brāhmaṇas. Their interest is greater for mythology and folk-lore, and for the details of the ritual, than for the history of religious thought. The following is the Hindu legend of the Flood from the S'atapatha Brāhmaṇa, i. 8, 1, 1 :—

> In the morning they brought to Manu water for washing, as men are in the habit of bringing it to wash with the hands. As he was thus washing a fish came into his hands (which spake to him), 'Preserve me; I shall save thee.' (Manu inquired), 'From what wilt thou save me?' (The fish replied), 'A flood shall sweep away all these creatures; from it I will rescue thee.' (Manu asked), 'How (shall) thy preservation (be effected)?' The fish said: 'So long as we are small, we

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[1] Macdonell, p. 209 ff.

[2] Whitney and Lanman, *Atharvaveda*, vol. i. p. cxvii. and note.

[3] Complete lists of the Brāhmaṇas are given in Barth[2], p. 2 ff. and notes; Max Müller, *Sanskr. Lit.*[2], p. 345 ff.; Macdonell, *l.c.*; and elsewhere.

are in great peril, for fish devours fish; thou shalt preserve me first in a jar. When I grow too large for the jar, then thou shalt dig a trench, and preserve me in that. When I grow too large for the trench, then thou shalt carry me away to the ocean. I shall then be beyond the reach of danger.' Straightway he became a large fish; for he waxes to the utmost. (He said), 'Now in such and such a year, then the flood will come; thou shalt therefore construct a ship, and resort to me; thou shalt embark in the ship when the flood rises, and I shall deliver thee from it.' Having thus preserved the fish, Manu carried him away to the sea. Then in the same year that the fish had enjoined, he constructed a ship and resorted to him. When the flood rose, Manu embarked in the ship. The fish swam towards him. He fastened the cable of the ship to the fish's horn. By this means he passed over this northern mountain.[1] The fish said, 'I have delivered thee; fasten the ship to a tree. But lest the water should cut thee off whilst thou art on the mountain, as much as the water subsides, so much shalt thou descend after it.' He accordingly descended after it as much (as it subsided). Wherefore also this, namely 'Manu's descent,' is (the name) of the northern mountain. Now the flood had swept away all these creatures; so Manu alone was left here. Desirous of offspring, he lived worshipping and toiling in arduous religious rites. Among these he also sacrificed with the *pāka*-[2] offering. He cast clarified butter, thickened milk, whey and curds, as an oblation into the waters. Thence in a year a woman was produced. . . . With her he lived worshipping and toiling in arduous religious rites, desirous of offspring. With her he begat this offspring, which is this offspring of Manu.[3]

A noteworthy example of speculation of another kind is found in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, iii. 44:—

The sun never sets nor rises. When people think to themselves the sun is setting, he only changes about after reaching

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[1] i.e. the Himālayas.

[2] Defined as a simple or domestic sacrifice, with regard to the precise nature of which the Indian authorities themselves are at variance; see Monier-Williams, *Sanskr. Dict.*, *s.v.*

[3] Muir, *Sansk. Texts*, vol. i.[3] p. 182 ff.; cp. *SBE*, vol. xii. p. 216, Max Müller, *Sansk. Lit.*[2], p. 425 ff.

the end of the day, and makes night below and day to what is on the other side. Then when people think he rises in the morning, he only shifts himself about after reaching the end of the night, and makes day below and night to what is on the other side. In fact, he never does set at all. Whoever knows this that the sun never sets, enjoys union and sameness of nature with him and abides in the same sphere.[1]

Doctrine

While however there is no precise system of theology or clearly marked philosophy in the Brāhmaṇas, there is a real if slight advance in religious thought. That this took place under the guidance of the priests, and was in the first instance intended to secure a position of privilege and power to a priestly class, may be regarded as certain. The doctrine of a future life has become definitely an article of faith, and it is more plainly taught that in this next life the good are rewarded, and the wicked punished, according to their deeds on earth. But the nature of the recompense or retribution is not set forth in any very explicit terms. The conception also of a re-birth in this world is found, but apparently only as a reward for those who have duly discharged their religious obligations.[2] The return to earth was neither universal nor compulsory,

[1] Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*[2], p. 35; cp. Speyer, in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 723 ff., who regards the statement in the text as having reference to the supposed two sides of the sun, bright and dark, which he presents successively to the regions below, *i.e.* the earth, and the regions above.

[2] *e.g. Śat. Brāhm.*, ii. 2, 4:—'When a man therefore dies and is laid on the pyre he is born again from the fire; for the fire consumes only his body. But as a man is born from father and mother, so is he born again from the fire. He however who fails to offer the Agnihotram never rises again. Therefore men ought to offer the Agnihotram.'—*SBE*, vol. xii. p. 324; cp. *ib.*, xiv. 9, 1; Deussen, i. 1. p. 186 f., and *id.* in *Sechzig Upan. d. Veda*, Leipzig, 1897, p. 137 f.

as in the later teaching. It was left to a future generation to elaborate and expound the great Hindu doctrine of the perpetual transmigration of souls, the most distinctive feature of Indian speculation concerning a life to come; the foreshadowings of which only are found in these earlier writings.

Characteristics of Religion of the Brāhmaṇas

Thus in general the religion of the Brāhmaṇas and of this later period of the Vedic literature proves itself to be a religion of externals, of punctilious and elaborate ritual. Changes in other directions that have taken place since the age of the hymns do little more than confirm and accentuate this essential character. Some of these changes have been already noticed. New deities are recognised or come into prominence; of whom the chief is *Prajāpati*, the lord of creatures, now the acknowledged head of the Hindu pantheon. His very name and nature emphasize the fact that a real advance in religious thought has here been made. No longer a god of the storm or the light, he is abstracted from all natural phenomena, and is placed above and behind them,—a mental conception and an effort of reason, rather than a personification of force. Many also of the older divinities of the hymns suffer eclipse, and are seldom if ever mentioned by name. For the first time moreover there is clearly distinguished a *triad* of gods, a group of three, Agni, Vāyu, and Sūrya, the fire, the air and the sun, regarded as comprehending all the forces and attributes of nature, and placing at the disposal of each the capacities and province of all.[1] These new deities, with more

[1] Contrast the *local* triads of Babylonia, *supra*, p. 162 f.

comprehensive powers and rights, required a new or at least more highly cultivated ceremonial for their worship. And in the Brāhmaṇas were elaborately conceived and set forth the directions for this worship, which later were again crystallized into a number of codes and rules and mnemonic formulae, known as *sūtras*, that in substance are more or less strictly observed in India at the present day. Moral teaching and precepts were not indeed entirely absent. But the outward organisation, the mere ritual of sacrifice, held the first place.

Rise of Brāhman Priesthood

In proportion then to the complexity of the outward and obligatory ceremonial, this art of practical religion, would be the necessity for a trained and instructed class, who should be able to carry it out discreetly and accurately, with minute and faultless attention to detail. As the letter usurped authority over the spirit, and the due observance of the rites of religion became of more importance than the moral character and life of the worshipper, there arose an order of men whose business it was to master the letter of the religious law, and to be able for themselves and for others exactly and efficiently to conduct its ceremonial of ritual and sacrifice.[1] It will readily be seen how such a class would tend to advance into the possession of exclusive rights and privileges. In their hands was the practical control not only of the destiny of a man after death, but also of his wellbeing in the present life. They wielded all the terrors of divine threatened vengeance for the non-fulfilment of religious obligations. An unlearned

[1] M. Cumont draws attention to the development on similar lines of a priestly class in the nearer East at the beginning of the Christian era, *Les Religions Orientales*, p. xix. f.

and ignorant man could not so sacrifice as to be well-pleasing to heaven. If he did not sacrifice, or if he erred in his sacrifice, the gods would assuredly visit him with pains and penalties, both temporal and eternal. He must therefore employ a member of the learned enlightened class to perform the sacrifice in his name and stead.

It was by these means, although perhaps not by these alone, that the caste of the Brāhmans gained in India its unique ascendancy and sacred inviolable character. Originally a hereditary priesthood, set apart for the study of the sacred books and the due performance of religious rites and ceremonies, the members of the priestly family or caste used the spiritual influence and authority thus placed in their hands as a stepping-stone to temporal dignity and power. In the West a similar instance of aggrandisement on the basis of religious claims is seen in the growth of the Papal authority in Europe during the Middle Ages; and in ancient Egypt the self-assertion of the sacerdotal orders originated in like manner, and issued in a strenuous and prolonged contention with the civil and royal power, in which for many centuries apparently the priests were victorious.[1] In India the struggle lasted in all probability for several hundred years. But the advantage which the possession of the key of sacred knowledge gave in each instance prevailed. It was this possession which, aided by a long and resolute persistence and a jealous closing of the door against any outside of their own narrow circle, enabled the Brāhmans to rivet fast the fetters of caste assumption and tyranny upon the subject races of India.

[1] Cp. *supra*, pp. 121f., 127, and Cumont, *op. cit.*, p. 226. Other examples from ancient and modern times might readily be cited.

Schools of Learning: Sūtras

The same necessity for a trained and educated priesthood gave rise to the Brāhman schools of learning. A teacher famed for his piety and knowledge attracted to himself disciples often from great distances, who sat at his feet and received from him oral instruction in the Vedas, their meaning and observances. The classical writings make frequent reference to these schools, and similar circles for study and exposition of the sacred law exist in all the principal centres of Indian national life at the present day.[1] In these schools appear to have been formed the collections of sacred writings, the *Śākhās* or recensions of the Veda, which have been more or less completely preserved, and afterwards the commentaries and works on criticism and grammar, philosophy, science and art.[2] From them also emanated in later times the manuals of ritual observances, the *Sūtras*, or collections of rules for the

[1] The traditions of the past in this respect, and the studies and methods based thereon, although their hold may have been loosened under the influence of Western thought and education, have by no means passed into oblivion or been rendered ineffective. It is stated, for example, that of the Nambūtiri Brāhmans of Malabar three-fourths are able to recite the entire text of the Veda to which they belong; and Professor Macdonell was told that the same was true of more than three thousand Brāhmans in the state of Cochin. See art. on the 'Brahmins of Malabar,' by K. Ramavarma Raja, in *JRAS*, 1910, 625 ff. In the north of India the ancient schools of learning seem to be more rapidly decreasing in numbers and influence.

[2] The schools of the prophets held a similar position in the national life of Israel, except in so far as the actual carrying out of the detail of the ritual was concerned; and may be quoted as a perhaps nearer parallel than is often supposed. They were at least centres of religious and literary culture in the land.

due performance of ceremonial either public or private.[1] Soon it became legally impossible for any but a Brāhman to offer sacrifice, or to celebrate any religious rite. This was not however the case in the earliest times. And on the strict and accurate fulfilment of the formalities of the ritual, and on the special qualification of the priest, much more stress was laid than on the moral character of the worshipper. Of the latter only two things seem to have been in general required, namely freedom from any legal impurity and a full persuasion of the efficacy of the rite. The fees exacted on these occasions by the officiating Brāhmans have gone far to bring about the general state of indebtedness and poverty among the lower classes of the Indian peoples.

The *Sūtras* themselves are arranged according as they have to do with the more elaborate public ceremonial, animal sacrifices and the like, or the simpler private observances of every individual and household. The former are almost although not entirely obsolete in India at the present day, and have been so for a long time past. The latter, including the ordinary daily acts of worship, special ceremonies on anniversaries and feast-days, rites of initiation and purification at births marriages and deaths, make up the larger part of the routine of daily religious life to the orthodox Brāhman of every district and caste.

[1] On the character of the *Sūtras*, the most concise compendia of rule and order ever invented, see especially Max Müller, *Anc. Sanskr. Lit.*[2], ch. i.; Wackernagel, *Altind. Gram.*, i. p. xxxii. f., and refs.; Macdonell, ch. ix.; etc. The Sūtra period so called is usually considered to be *circa* 500–200 B.C.; *supra*, p. 206.

Āraṇyakas

The treatises known as *Āraṇyakas* hold an intermediate position between the Brāhmaṇas and the Upanishads. In regard to subject-matter their affinities and interests lie with the latter, from which indeed they are separated by a very narrow line of distinction, more formal than essential. As with other portions of the Vedic literature, however, the nature of their contents shows considerable variety; and in some sections or chapters they display more of the character of a commentary upon or explanation of parts of the older literature, than contain the products of independent thought. In general, however, they may be described as manuals of devotion or mystical speculation, which according to the native Indian authorities were designed for study in the seclusion of the forest (*araṇye*), but which according to another explanation bore the name because they were composed by recluses or hermits in their forest-homes. Chronologically also the Āraṇyaka literature succeeds the Brāhmaṇas, and is anterior to the period of the Upanishads and Sūtras.[1] As in other instances however the limits were not clearly defined.

Thus to every *śākhā*, or school of Vedic teaching, was attached an Āraṇyaka supplementing or completing its Brāhmaṇa, and pointing the way to the fuller exposition of the Upanishads. The extant Āraṇyakas, however, belong to the Rigveda and Yajurveda alone. Of the former two treatises of this description are known, the Aitareya and the Kaushītaki or Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyakas,[2] two also

[1] *supra*, p. 243.

[2] Translations of both have recently been published by A. B. Keith, the former with the original Sanskrit text in *Anecd. Oxon.*, 1910, the latter as vol. xviii. of the New Series of the Oriental Translation Fund, London, 1908.

of the latter, the Bṛihadāraṇyaka and the Taittirīya, belonging respectively to the White and the Black Yajurveda. This classification or assignment of the literary text-books is probably not unconnected in its origin with the theory of the four *āśramas*, the appointed and consecutive periods into which the life of the orthodox Brāhman was divided.[1] The Āraṇyakas were treatises appointed for guidance and study during the third period of his life, as *vānaprastha*, after he had severed himself from the world and retired to the forest, as the Brāhmaṇas were his rule for practical duty and service while he lived the life of a *gṛihastha* or householder.[2]

THE UPANISHADS

Character and Importance

The part of the Vedic literature which is included under the name of Upanishad is in many respects the most interesting and important. There are many treatises which by their form and contents lay claim to the title. Of these some are of recent date. But the name is technically and usually confined to the few of acknowledged authority and antiquity. Both chronologically and in the course of the natural development of thought these works are later than the mantra and brāhmaṇa portion of the Veda. From the latter however they are not separated by any very

[1] *infra*, pp. 287, 331 f.

[2] On the Āraṇyakas cp. Max Müller, *Anc. Sanskr. Lit.*[2], pp. 313 ff., 334 ff.; A. B. Keith, *opp. cit.*; and the art. in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 673 f., with the references there given.

definite line. In them is to be found the most subtle and elevated thought and the most refined speculation, mingled with apparently irrational and puerile fancies. They are however comparatively free from the sophistries and grotesque exaggerations to which a later age abandoned itself. And it is by the Upanishads alone that in the ultimate resort native Indian students whether of philosophy or of religion establish their reasonings and justify their opinions. They have therefore been described by a scholar whose knowledge of the Indian faiths has rarely been surpassed as 'practically the only Veda of all thoughtful Hindus in the present day.'[1] For the most part it is from them that all attempts at religious reform from within have taken their rise in India; and to them all orthodox native reformers have turned, as presenting their religion in its original and purest form. It is not however easy by means of brief extracts to convey a just impression of the general doctrine and teaching of these works. Their style is diffuse, full of returns and repetitions, and does not readily lend itself to comprehensive summary. Complete renderings moreover of all the principal Upanishads into English are easily accessible.[2] It will be more helpful and advantageous therefore to endeavour to present in as connected and consistent a form as possible a brief account of their religious ideas and teaching as lying at the basis of all later developments of Hindu thought and practice.

[1] Sir M. Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*[2], p. 35; cp. the opinion of Rāmmohun Roy, the great Indian reformer, as given by Max Müller, *SBE*, vol. i. p. lxii. ff.

[2] *SBE*, vols. i., xv., translated by F. Max Müller, Oxford, 1879 and 1884. Cp. also the admirable German renderings of P. Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishads des Veda*, Leipzig, 1897.

The origin and interpretation of the term *Upanishad* is explained by the native grammarians from a root *śad* or *sad*, to perish. Thus through the knowledge conveyed in these works ignorance and passion in the soul is destroyed by the revelation of the supreme being and source of all. So S'aṅkara, who offers also an alternative explanation, that the name was given to these writings because they indicate the way to the Brahman, the same root being supposed to have the meaning of 'to go.' The Indian equivalent of the term is *rahasyam*, 'secret,' 'hidden'; and apart from derivation it seems always to connote the idea of secrecy or concealment of a doctrine or text, the knowledge of which should be withheld from ordinary men, and communicated only to the elect few who are counted worthy. Thus in one passage it is said that the father shall teach the doctrine to his eldest son, 'but to no one else, whoever he may be.'[1] This conception of a doctrine or truth which must not be profaned by being brought within the reach of the vulgar has always determined the Indian treatment of its sacred writings, and is still in most of the sects an inviolable principle of religious action.[2]

Meaning of the Name

The true explanation appears to be that the word has its origin in a root *sad*, meaning to sit down, with the prefixed prepositions *upa* and *ni*; and therefore

[1] C'hānd. 3, 11, 5; cp. Maitr. 6, 29:—'This most mysterious secret shall be imparted to none who is not a son or a pupil, and who has not yet attained tranquillity.'

[2] Cp. Deussen, *Upanishads*, p. 10 ff., who points out that in Plato and often elsewhere the same thought is found of a doctrine too sacred or difficult of apprehension to be made common property.

signifies properly the sitting down at the feet of a teacher to hear his words.[1] Ordinarily however the term is not employed in this its literal meaning; but by a natural association of thought comes to denote the mystical or secret doctrine received at the lips of a teacher, or through the study of sacred books. Thus regarded, it would seem to be equally applicable to the whole of the Veda. In practice however, and in all the extant literature, it is confined to the highest and most abstract teaching or knowledge, the speculative doctrines which form the third part of S'ruti, or sacred revelation; which are therefore known as *Vedānta*, the end (*anta*) of the Veda, the sum and substance of all true wisdom. Hence the metaphysical system of the Upanishads, or the Vedānta, is also known by a term, celebrated in Hindu philosophy, *jñānakāṇḍa*, the method or department of knowledge, the path that leads to emancipation and blessedness by the way of spiritual insight and intelligence, which only the truly wise can tread.[2] Thus *Upanishad* is the philosophical and speculative portion of the Veda, as distinguished from the *karmakāṇḍa*, which is the practical method of works, intended for and suited to the multitude, who need for their religion the tangible support of rites and ceremonies, and cannot rise to the purely intellectual standpoint of the reasoner and sage.

[1] Cp. Max Müller, *Anc. Sanskr. Lit.*[2], p. 319:—'There can be little doubt that Upanishad meant originally the act of sitting down near a teacher, of submissively listening to him; and it is easy to trace the steps by which it came to mean implicit faith, and at last truth or divine revelation.' Oldenberg suggests that the sitting was an act of worship, or of meditation on the Supreme. This is possible; but the other view is more in harmony with Indian modes of thought and the usage of the texts. See Deussen, *loc. cit.*

[2] Cp. the passage cited from the Bhagavad-Gītā, *infra*, p. 292.

In the Vedic writings themselves, therefore, the word *Upanishad* may be said to have three more or less distinct significations.[1]

(1) Mystical exposition of ceremony and ritual.

(2) Knowledge received through such exposition.

(3) A treatise or book in which this knowledge is contained.

These treatises are attached to the Brāhmaṇas, and extend and develop their thought and teaching in the direction of free speculation. They are themselves also sometimes comprehended in, or are supplementary to the *Āraṇyakas*, from which they do not essentially differ in regard to the subject-matter. Often they quote or incorporate verses from the hymns, which are then made the texts for philosophical or legendary expositions. The number of works that bear the character of Upanishads has been estimated as high as 250.[2] The estimate is

Number and Date of the Upanishads: Relation to the Brāhmaṇas

[1] It does not follow that the chronological order of development of the various meanings was as stated above. In all probability the speculative philosophy was at first entirely independent, and was only later fitted to the ritual.

[2] See Barth, p. 65 f., who says 'nearly 250'; where also a list is given of the principal Upanishads and the literature quoted. Cp. Max Müller, *Sanskr. Lit.*², p. 325 ff.; Deussen, *Upanishads*, p. 22 ff.; *SBE*, vol. i. p. lxviii. f., vol. xv. p. xi. f. The Upanishads translated in the volumes of the Sacred Books of the East are the eleven referred to by S'aṅkara, which are supposed to be the oldest, namely the C'hāndogya, Kena, Aitareya, Kaushītaki, Īśa or Vājasaneyi, Kaṭha, Muṇḍaka Taittirīya, Bṛihadāraṇyaka, S'vetāśvatara, and Praśna. They have often been edited in the original, for example, in the Bombay Sanskrit Series, or later in a small and convenient edition at Benares in 1889. The texts published at Poona, in the Ānandāśrama Series, are said to be the most accurate.

probably too high, but the total certainly exceeds the half of this, and to the list new names are even now occasionally added. Some uncertainty still hangs over the date and chronological order of these writings. The most ancient are prior to the rise of Buddhism in the sixth century B.C.; or if not prior in their present form, at least embody an earlier tradition. The latest originated in comparatively recent times. The period during which these speculations struck deepest root and flourished most widely may be placed with Professor Max Müller from the eighth to the sixth century before Christ. They contain, however, elements which appear to lay just claim to a greater antiquity, and they have all undergone modification and interpolation at the hands of later teachers and revisers. The diction is less archaic than that of the mantras or hymns, approximating to the classical Sanskrit; but employs words and grammatical forms and constructions foreign to the style of the later language. The most ancient and the most modern are written in prose; a few lying in point of date between these are in verse; and all usually adopt the form of dialogue.

Classification of Ancient Upanishads

The determination of the relative date of the Upanishads is made partly upon the basis of language and style, and partly upon that of subject-matter, where a speculative discussion or theory appears to presuppose arguments or conclusions elsewhere considered, or even directly to refer to them. The result is to distinguish four groups, the extreme members of which approximate to one another in style as well as in thought, and a clear line of distinction cannot always be drawn.

1. The oldest, written in an archaic prose, are the Bṛihadāraṇyaka and the Ch'hāndogya Upanishads, of which the former is richest in content, and presents the most systematic exposition of doctrine. It consists in its present form of six parts or chapters, of which the last two are later and appear to regard the doctrine of transmigration which they discuss from a different standpoint. The first two chapters set forth the philosophic doctrine of the ātman, which is represented as transcending and superseding the polytheistic worship of the gods. In the remaining chapters the famous teacher, Yājñavalkya, expounds in answer to questions addressed to him the most distinctive doctrines concerning the Brahman or ātman, and presents the philosophic or metaphysical theory in its most refined and elaborate form. These two chapters may be said to contain in brief the essential and most characteristic teaching of the Upanishads. The remaining members of the group, in the order named, are the Taittirīya, Aitareya, Kaushītaki, and the Kena. The last-named is written partly in verse, and in respect of its contents is chronologically in contact with the later treatises.[1]

2. The second group consists of compositions almost entirely metrical. The oldest and most independent is the Kāṭhaka. There follow the Īśa, S'vetāśvatara, Muṇḍaka, and Mahānārāyaṇa. These appear to assume as already established the main doctrines, which in the earlier group were in course of being worked out through argument and discussion.

3. The Upanishads of the third group are written in prose of a later type, approximating to the diction and style of the classical Sanskrit. Reminiscences of the earlier treatises are frequent, and these last are occasionally quoted. There are only three members, Praśna, Maitrāyaṇīya, and Māṇḍūkya.

4. The greater number of the Upanishads are of later date, and are attached more or less closely to the Atharvaveda. About thirty or more are usually enumerated as the more important, most of which are sectarian in their character, exalting the claims of Vishṇu or S'iva, or expound the principles of the Yoga or other specialised teaching. They are written in prose with a few verses inserted, or less frequently

[1] On the Āitareya Up., see esp. A. B. Keith in his edition of the Aitareya Āraṇyaka, p. 39 ff.

are entirely poetical. German renderings of the most interesting and important will be found in P. Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishads des Veda*, Leipzig, 1897. Cp. *id.*, *Upanishads*, p. 22 ff., and *Trans. of the Third Internat. Congress of the History of Religions*, vol. ii. p. 19 ff.; Macdonell, pp. 226, 234 ff.

Of the above-named ancient Upanishads, or that contain ancient material in late form, the Aitareya and Kaushītaki belong to the Rigveda, the Bṛihadāraṇyaka and the Īśa to the White Yajurveda, the Taittirīya, Kāṭhaka, S'vetāśvatara, Mahānārāyaṇa and Maitrāyaṇa to the Black Yajurveda, and the C'hāndogya and Kena to the Sāmaveda. The remaining three are classed as Atharvic Upanishads, but expound the philosophical doctrines of the older treatises.

S'aṅkara

The most important native Indian commentator and elucidator of the Upanishads is S'aṅkara or S'aṅkarāćārya (*circa* 800 A.D.), a Brāhman of the south of India, to whom in addition to many other works are ascribed commentaries on eleven of the principal Upanishads. The composition of these may very probably be due in part not to S'aṅkara but to his disciples, or the school to which they belonged. S'aṅkara's chief work, however, was an elaborate and systematic interpretation of the *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa, the thinker and scholar, who was the first to attempt to condense the teaching of the Upanishads concerning the Brahman into the form of brief sūtras. The date of Bādarāyaṇa is uncertain, and it is uncertain also whether he was acquainted with any of the Upanishad treatises in the form in which they now exist. He quotes however from such works as were known to him, and many of his quotations can be identified in our

present texts.[1] Bādarāyaṇa's sūtras, with the classic commentary and interpretation of S'aṅkara, form the basis of the later Vedānta.[2] An independent interpretation of the sūtras in a theistic sense was given three centuries later by Rāmānuja the great teacher and reformer.[3] The brevity and ambiguity of the sūtras is so great that it is impossible to determine absolutely which of the rival interpretations is correct. It is probable however that S'aṅkara represents more faithfully the meaning of the original author.[4]

Contents and Doctrine

The instructed disciple of the Upanishads accordingly pursues this path of knowledge, *jñānakāṇḍa*, and endeavours to apprehend and make his own the great mystical truth there expounded, to know which will secure for him deliverance from the bondage of nature and ignorance, and bring him into union with the one source of all life. To set forth this truth in its simplest form is comparatively easy, however difficult may be its complete and logical apprehension. All individual souls are only reflections as it were of the great universal Soul; they are not distinct therefrom, as separate or

[1] Deussen, p. 27 ff.

[2] *infra*, p. 313 ff.; a brief life of S'aṅkara, with an account of his philosophy, was published a few years ago by two native Indian scholars at Madras (n.d.).

[3] *infra*, p. 375 ff.

[4] Both commentaries have been translated into English, with the sūtras which they expound, by Professor G. Thibaut in *SBE*, vols. xxxiv., xxxviii., and xlviii. Cp. also Max Müller, *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, 1899, p. 153 ff., who quotes an Indian tradition that Bādarāyaṇa was the same as Vyāsa, the reputed author of the Mahābhārata, an improbable, if not impossible identification. The latter may indeed be no more than a family name; Deussen, *l.c.*; Macdonell, pp. 240, 402.

individual entities, but identical with it; and he therefore who knows this is truly wise. There is but one being in the universe who comprehends all and is himself all, one only without a second, *ekam evādvitīyam*, he whom men call Brahmā or Brahman, the existent one, *sat*, τὸ ὄν. Each individual exists as it were only by virtue of a life derived from Brahman, and in the final issue is in reality Brahman, who comprehends and contains and is in himself all things.

In this connection therefore the term Brahman may be described as equivalent to the soul of the universe, the absolute, the cosmical principle which pervades all, in and through which all things have their being. The corresponding human or psychical principle which is to the individual what Brahman is to the universe is the *ātman*, the spirit or soul which vivifies the bodily frame. The former is the older term, the variety and development of which may be traced from the Rigveda onwards.[1] And the fundamental conception therefore of the most refined thought of the Upanishads is the identity of these two, Brahman and ātman, *tat tvam asi*, 'thou art that,' i.e. Brahman.[2] The original derivation of the word ātman is uncertain.[3] But it thus came to be

Brahman and Ātman: Non-Duality

[1] Cp. *supra*, p. 235 ff.; *ERE*, vol. ii. pp. 195 f., 796 ff.

[2] Chānd., vi. 8. 7; cp. the *aham brahmāsmi* of Bṛihad. i. 4. 10.

[3] The connection with the root *an*, to breathe, and the Greek ἄημι, ἀϋτμή, ἀτμός is very doubtful; as also are the theories that trace it to the roots *at*, to go, or *av* = *vā*, to blow (as the wind). More probable perhaps is the suggested derivation from two pronominal roots, *a* (in *a-ham*, ego) and *ta*, this, so that the original meaning would be 'this I'; cp. the Greek αὐτός. See Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Philos.*, i. 1. p. 285 f., and 324 ff., where

significant, the watchword as it were of a whole philosophy, among the most far-reaching and logically consistent that the world has known. It is usual to translate the word by 'self' or 'soul.' Neither rendering is adequate, and it is better to retain the original term.

Thus the thought which underlies the speculation of the ancient Indian thinkers may be briefly and antithetically expressed *Ātmānam ātmanā paśya*, Discern the self by the self[1]; a saying which has been compared with the Greek Γνῶθι σεαυτόν, but erroneously, for in reality its root lies in entirely different ideas. It is rather to be interpreted or paraphrased, Learn to recognise in thyself the reflection of the one great Self, which is Brahman. This central conception of the Upanishads is set forth at length and illustrated from many different points of view in these treatises. A few examples are all that is necessary to exhibit the character of the thought of these ancient writers, and the peculiarity of their mode of expression, in both respects differing widely from European philosophers. The entire texts however, diffuse and full of repetitions as they may appear to be, well deserve and will repay careful study. The following is from the *C'hāndogya Upanishad*, iii. 14[2]:—

the relevant passages from the Veda are cited; *id.* in *ERE*, vol. ii., *s.v.* ātman.

[1] Cp. Bhag., 13. 24:—*dhyānenātmani paśyanti kecid ātmānam ātmanā*, 'by meditation in the self some discern the self by the self,' *SBE*, viii. p. 105. The same thing in imitation or parody is asserted of S'iva in Kum. Sambh., 3. 50.

[2] The translations are those of Professor Max Müller in the volumes referred to above. The slight alterations made in one or two instances have been in the hope of conveying more simply the meaning without sacrifice of fidelity.

All this is Brahman. Let a man meditate on that (visible world) as beginning, ending, and breathing in it.

. . . . . .

The intelligent, whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether, from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed; he who embraces all this, who never speaks, and is never surprised,

He is my self within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of a canary seed. He also is my self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.

He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is never surprised, he, my self within the heart, is that Brahman. When I shall have departed from hence, I shall obtain him (that Self). He who has this faith has no doubt.[1]

. . . . . .

There is one ruler, the Self within all things, who makes the one form manifold. The wise who perceive him within their Self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

There is one eternal thinker, thinking non-eternal thoughts, who though one fulfils the desires of many. The wise who perceive him within their Self, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others.[2]

A characteristic description of the ātman is given by Yājñavalkya in *Bṛihad.*, 3. 8. 8, 11 :—

O Gārgī, the Brāhmaṇas call this the Akshara (imperishable). It is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, neither red (like fire) nor fluid (like water); it is without shadow, without darkness, without air, without ether, without adhesion, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without heat, without breath, without mouth, without measure, having no within and no without, it devours nothing and nothing devours it.

. . . . . .

[1] *SBE*, i. p. 48.

[2] *Kaṭha-Up.*, ii. 5. 12, 13, *SBE*, xv. p. 19 f.; cp. *S'atap. Brāhm.*, x. 6. 3.

That Brahman, O Gārgī, is unseen but seeing, unheard but hearing, unperceived but perceiving, unknown but knowing. There is no other seer, there is no other hearer, there is no other perceiver, there is no other knower. In that Akshara then, O Gārgī, the ether is inwoven, like warp and woof.[1]

To a similar effect in other Upanishads :—

In the beginning Brahman was all this. He was one and infinite; infinite in the east, infinite in the south, infinite in the west, infinite in the north, above and below and everywhere infinite. East and the other regions do not exist for him, nor across, nor below, nor above. The Highest Self is not to be fixed, he is unlimited, unborn, not to be reasoned about, not to be conceived. He is like the ether (everywhere), and at the destruction of the universe he alone is awake.[2]

In the beginning this was Self alone, in the shape of a person (purusha). He looking round saw nothing but his Self. He first said, 'This is I'; therefore he became I by name.[3]

Non-duality, the unity of principle and life throughout the whole universe, is taught in the following passages, and in many others :—

'In the beginning, my good sir, there was that only which is (τὸ ὄν), one only without a second. Others say, in the beginning there was that only which is not (τὸ μὴ ὄν), one only without a second; and from that which is not that which is was born.'

'But how indeed, my good sir, could this be?' he said. 'How from that which is not could that which is be born? That only which is, my good sir, this was in the beginning, one only without a second.'[4]

He is the one God, hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the self within all beings, watching over all works, dwelling in all

[1] *SBE*, xv. p. 137 ff.

[2] *Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Up.*, vi. 17.

[3] *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Up.*, i. 4. 1. Cp. *ib.*, 10; *Kaṭha Up.*, i. 2. 20.

[4] *C'hānd Up.*, vi. 2. 1, 2.

beings, the witness, the perceiver, the only one, free from qualities.

He is the one ruler of many who (seem to act, but really) do not act; he makes the one seed manifold. The wise who perceive him within their self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

He is the eternal among eternals, the thinker among thinkers, who though one fulfils the desires of many. He who has known that cause which is to be apprehended by Sāṅkhya (philosophy) and Yoga (religious discipline), he is freed from all fetters.[1]

When there is, as it were, duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other, one salutes the other, one hears the other, one perceives the other, one touches the other, one knows the other; but when the Self only is all this, how should he see another, how should he smell another, how should he taste another, how should he salute another, how should he hear another, how should he touch another, how should he know another? How should he know Him by whom he knows all this? That Self is to be described by No, no![2] He is incomprehensible, for he cannot be comprehended; he is imperishable, for he cannot perish; he is unattached, for he does not attach himself; unfettered, he does not suffer, he does not fail. How, O beloved, should he know the Knower? Thus, O Maitreyī, thou hast been instructed. Thus far goes immortality.[3]

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[1] *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, vi. 11–13.

[2] *Neti, neti*, 'not so, not so'; cp. Deussen, *Upan.*, p. 149 f., who refers to other explanations which have been suggested of the original meaning of the phrase. The conception that the infinite, or absolute, is unknowable is of course a commonplace of metaphysics; cp. H. Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion*, Eng. transl., 1906, p. 79; B. Pünjer, *Christian Philosophy of Religion*, Edinb., 1887, p. 98, in his account of the philosophy of G. Bruno.

[3] *Bṛih. Up.*, iv. 5. 15; cp. *Kaṭh. Up.*, quoted above, p. 266; *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, iii. 4. 1. 1.; *Bṛih. Up.*, iii. 9. 26; iv. 2. 4–4, 22.

Origin of Upanishad Doctrine

Sooner or later it was inevitable that an attempt should be made to establish a harmony between the abstract and metaphysical teaching of the Upanishads and the simpler realistic doctrines of the hymns and Brāhmaṇas. The former are not in any sense the product of, or a development from the latter. There are many indications that at first they asserted themselves in a polemical sense against the cruder anthropomorphic representations of the older religion. It has been suggested with much probability that they had their origin in speculation and debate in Kshatriya circles and at the royal courts, where, if later practice may be taken as a guide, the utmost freedom of thought and discussion was frequently encouraged, and were only later, under pressure of necessity, adopted and made their own by the Brāhmans. It is in favour of this view that in the Upanishads themselves Brāhman students and teachers are represented as seeking instruction from Kshatriya princes, by whom they are convicted of ignorance and are taught the true way.[1] Seeing that these treatises have been preserved and handed down by Brāhman scholars and in Brāhmanical circles of learning, it is

[1] *e.g.* in the Bṛihad. Up., ii. 1, Ajātaśatru, ruler of Kāśi or Benares, rejects the several definitions of the Brahman which the proud Brāhman Gārgya Bālāki puts forward, reduces him to silence, and then expounds to him the real nature of the Brahman, whereupon the Brāhman himself requests that he may be allowed to become the king's pupil. Similarly in Chānd. i. 8. 1. f., v. 3–10, the Kshatriya Pravāhaṇa Jaivali gives instruction to Gautama and other Brāhmans who come to him for discussion and enlightenment; and it is expressly stated (v. 3. 7) that the knowledge concerning the ātman had never before been in the possession of Brāhmans. Cp. Deussen, p. 17 ff., and references.

unlikely that representations so inimical to their claim to a monopoly of knowledge would have been allowed to stand, if they had not been founded on fact.

Reconciliation of conflicting Views

A solution of the difficulty and a removal of the antagonism between the two views appear to have been sought in more than one direction. The ritual service of the gods was apparently in complete and irreconcilable contradiction with a doctrine which set forth the all-comprehending unity of Brahman, denied the existence of any but the One, and asserted the identity of the human self or soul with the soul of the universe, of the ātman with Brahman. In such a theory there would seem to be no room for worship, for sacrifice, or for ceremonial. It was explained, however, that not all were able to understand or to accept the refined doctrine of the ātman, which needed concentration of faculties and intellect for its comprehension; and that for the ordinary man the method of ritual and sacrifice was a permissible, and as far as it went effective mode of putting himself into relation with the unseen and discharging his religious duties. It was always and only a secondary and subordinate way, *karma-kāṇḍa*, to be abandoned by the truly enlightened man who knows the ātman. It possessed however a temporary and relative worth, which was good and indeed essential for those who were unable to attain to the best. The ātman doctrine depreciated all other means of obtaining deliverance, including the study of the Veda and ascetic practices, but conceded to them a kind of inferior but real value, which would naturally and inevitably be dispensed with when a higher level of spiritual discernment was gained.

More important was the explanation of the ritual on symbolical and allegorical lines. The forms and ceremonies had a meaning. They were types and symbols of the true, the ātman, unknown and unknowable, presenting itself in apparent form, which the human mind might grasp through the bodily senses, in order that from and through the seen he might be led upwards to the unseen. The Upanishads, like all old religious books, or indeed the religious books of any age, are full of type and symbol, of a rich imagery wherein the writers endeavoured to picture forth to themselves and others that which in its essential nature they knew themselves unable to define or to tell. To this latter thought they always come back as the final word on the nature of the universe, and the constitution and being of all that is. The ātman in its essential reality is unknowable and unknown. But in the physical phenomena of the universe, and in the rites and ritual of an external religious practice, men may see in dim and blurred fashion, as in a defective mirror, some aspect or shadow of the truth, the complete apprehension of which is for ever beyond their ken. The images of the mirror are helpful, and for the ordinary man indispensable. He however 'who knows this,' that he himself and the Brahman are one, does not need the aid of type or symbol, but has become possessed of the perfect knowledge, and henceforth is at peace.

Symbolism

A somewhat similar explanation is given of the relation of the adherent of the ātman doctrine to asceticism, and to the virtue and powers which such practices have in India always been understood to confer. To the fully enlightened man the practice of asceticism is a matter of indifference, a lower

and less efficacious means of attaining an end to which wisdom and insight have at once introduced him. Ascetic usages are not decried or depreciated; but he who has learnt the way of knowledge will not need or wish to resort to ways which may indeed ultimately conduct to the same end, but do so by toilsome and circuitous routes.

Prāṇā a Type of Brahman

A natural and frequently recurring symbol of Brahman is *prāṇa*, the breath, or *vāyu*, the wind, the latter holding to the universe the same relation as the *prāṇa* to the individual man. In its mysterious and elusive character the wind or breath presented a fitting type of the unknowable ātman. And in a striking allegory that recurs in several of the Upanishads the superiority of the *prāṇa* to the other organs of the body is described, whereby again is suggested its close connection with the unseen self:—

> The five vital organs, tongue eye ear mind (*manas*) and breath, come to Prajāpati requesting him to decide the question as to which of them is the superior. His answer is 'he on whose departure the body finds itself in the worst condition has the precedence among you' Thereupon in succession speech, sight, hearing, and manas go forth, and after a year's absence return to find that the body, though maimed, has been able to exist without them. 'Then the prāṇa prepared to go forth; but as a steed, if he breaks loose, tears away the foot-ropes by which he is tethered, so he tore away the other vital organs. Then they came to him and said, Sir, thou art he; thou hast the precedence over us, go not forth.'[1]

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[1] C'hānd. v. 1. 6–12, *SBE* i. p. 72 ff., cp. Bṛihad. vi. 1. 7–13, Praśna ii. 2, Kaush. iii. 3; Deussen, p. 101 ff.; and on the historical development of the meaning of the term, and the individual and cosmical prāṇas, *id.*, *Alleg. Gesch. d. Philos.*, i. 1 p. 294 ff.

Thus the breath in man, the prāṇa, is Brahman.[1] The same Brahman again is explained as identical with *ākāśa*, the ether around and within us, 'omnipresent and unchanging in the heart'[2]; and in another passage *ākāśa* and *manas*, mind or will, are found together as symbolical forms or types under which the Brahman is to be meditated on or worshipped.[3] Elsewhere the really symbolical character of the *ākāśa* is clearly asserted:—

> He who dwelling in the ether (ākāśa) is distinct from the ether, whom the ether knows not, whose body the ether is, who rules the ether from within, he is thy soul, the inner guide, the immortal.[4]

Similarly *āditya*, the sun, is Brahman[5]; but behind and beyond the material sun of the universe there is the golden spirit or soul (*purusha*) of the sun, who looks forth from the sun and is lord over all.[6] This conception of the *purusha*, who as a little man, a dwarf, of the size of a thumb, has his seat within the heart of man and thence controls his whole nature and life, is one of the most curious within the range of this literature. Identical with the *purusha* of a man is the *purusha* who dwells within, and rules the sun, moon, stars, etc. During the life of the man his soul, or *purusha*, looks forth through his eye, and may there be seen in the pupil. At his death it escapes through a small hole at the top of the skull, to rejoin or be re-absorbed into the

Āditya and the Purusha

[1] Kaush. ii. 1, 2.

[2] C'hānd. iii. 13. 7–9.

[3] C'hānd. xviii. 1. 1., cp. Bṛih. iv. 1. 6.

[4] Bṛihad. iii. 7. 12.

[5] C'hānd. iv. 19. 1.

[6] *ib.*, i. 6. 8, 7. 5 f., Taitt. 2. 8.; cp. C'hānd. iii. 1–11.

great Universal Soul. Hints or pre-intimations of this doctrine of the *purusha* are to be found in the Rigveda itself. Reference is frequently made to it in the Upanishads; and in accordance with their general teaching it is explained that the human *purusha* or *ātman* and the *purusha* of the sun, etc., are in reality one and the same.

> The person (purusha), of the size of a thumb, stands in the middle of the Self, as lord of the past and the future, and thenceforward fears no more. This is that.
>
> That person, of the size of a thumb, is like a light without smoke, lord of the past and the future, he is the same to-day and to-morrow. This is that.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> As pure water poured into pure water remains the same, thus, O Gautama, is the Self of a thinker who knows.[1]
>
> The person not larger than a thumb, the inner Self, is always settled in the heart of men. Let a man draw that Self forth from his body with steadiness, as one draws the pith from a reed. Let him know that Self as the bright, as the immortal; yes, as the bright, as the immortal.[2]
>
> Now the person who is seen in the eye, he is *Ric*, he is Sāman, Uktha, Yajus, Brahman. The form of that person (in the eye) is the same as the form of the other person (in the sun), the joints of the one (*Ric* and *Sāman*) are the joints of the other, the name of the one (*ut*) is the name of the other.[3]
>
> Now what is the true, that is the Āditya (the sun), the person that dwells in yonder orb, and the person in the right eye. These two rest on each other, the former resting with his rays in the latter, the latter with his prānas (senses) in the former.[4]

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[1] *Kaṭha Up.* ii. 4. 12–15. [2] *ib.*, ii. 6. 17.

[3] *Ch'hānd. Up.*, i. 7. 5. Uktha is explained as a collection of hymns to be recited, the Sāman to be sung, and the Yajus muttered.

[4] *Bṛihad. Up.*, v. 5. 2; on the history of Aditi, Āditya in the Veda, cp. also Max Müller in *SBE*, xxxii. p. 241 ff., and *ss.vv.*, vol. I. p. 4 ff.

Earth fire food and the sun (these are my forms, or forms of Brahman). The person that is seen in the sun, I am he, I am he indeed.

. . . . . .

The person that is seen in the moon, I am he, I am he indeed.

. . . . . .

The person that is seen in the lightning, I am he, I am he indeed.

. . . . . .

The person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman.[1]

A more mystical symbol of Brahman is found in the sacred syllable *Om*.[2]

Om is ether (*kha*), is Brahman.[3]

That (imperishable) syllable means Brahman, that syllable means the highest (Brahman); he who knows that syllable, whatever he desires, is his.[4]

The most important and significant mode of expression, however, is in the triple representation of the Brahman as *sat*, being, *ćit*, thought, and *ānanda*, bliss; **Sac'c'idānanda** the Brahman is *saććidānanda* in the fullest and most complete conception that can be formed of him. It is only in the later Upanishads that this more abstract, and therefore to speculative thought less inadequate symbolizing of the Supreme makes its appearance;

[1] C'hānd. iv. 11–15; cp. *ib.*, i. 6. 6., viii. 7. 3., S'vetaśv. iii. 12 ff. The same doctrine is found in the Bhagavad-Gītā *passim*, *infra*, pp. 292, 366 ff.

[2] *supra*, p. 236 f.

[3] Bṛihad. v. 1. 1.; cp. Taitt. 1. 8., Maitrāy. iv. 4, vii. 11.

[4] Kaṭha, i. 2. 16.

thereafter in the subsequent literature of the Vedānta school it is frequently met with; as in Greek philosophy the material symbol of water which Thales employs for the ultimate and universal principle precedes the number of Pythagoras, and the immaterial νοῦς of Anaxagoras. Each conception occurs separately, apparently before they are brought into combination.[1] It is pointed out however, in harmony with the doctrine of the unknowableness of the Brahman or ātman, that each of these terms, and *a fortiori* all together, implies a negation, and is intended ultimately not to make a positive assertion concerning the ātman, but to deny the applicability of all predicates, even the highest, to that which is above all predication.[2] Thus *sat*, being, necessarily suggests or implies *asat*, not being, τὸ μὴ ὄν. Brahman however transcends both. So also *ćit*, thought, is only conceivable as contrasted with that which is not thought, *aćit*; but Brahman is beyond and above both *ćit* and *aćit*. Moreover by the statement that the Brahman is *ānanda*, bliss, is not meant that Brahman enjoys ananda, or lives in a blissful state, as though he were capable of sensations or experiences. Brahman *is* ānanda, exactly as he *is* sat, or ćit. In reality he transcends them all, and the assertion that the Brahman is *saććidānanda* can only mean, when fully and finally analysed, that no predicates of language, or conceptions of thought, are adequate to express that which the thinker of the Upanishads desired to convey by the loftiest abstraction of his philosophy, the Brahman.

[1] C'hānd. vi. 2. 1., cp. Bṛih. ii. 1. 20, 3. 6, Kaush. i. 6.; Bṛih. i. 4. 7, iii. 8. 11, C'hānd. 8. 12. 4, Kaush. iii. 8; Taitt. iii. 6, C'hānd. vii. 23; cp. Deussen, pp. 126 ff., 146 f.

[2] Cp. *supra*, p. 268, and *infra*, p. 277 ff.

To this doctrine of the identity of the human soul, of all souls, with the divine was given the name, of great significance in Hindu philosophy, of *advaita*, non-dualism. **Advaita**

Ultimately moreover from this doctrine of advaita was inferred the final conclusion of the Upanishad metaphysics that the Brahman is beyond the reach of knowledge. With the formulation of the conception of the ātman the question became immediately pressing how and to what extent might the ātman become known. And various answers were given, corresponding in part to the supposed stages or degrees in the progress of man's knowledge. (1) Formally and externally the knowledge of the ātman might and would be communicated by the appointed teacher. As repeatedly in the Upanishads themselves, and universally in India, it seems to have been contemplated that the sacred deposit of wisdom should be handed on orally to worthy recipients, and through them to succeeding generations. (2) But in the second place, since the ātman is the living conscious soul or self within the man, it was natural to conclude that by looking within, in his own self-consciousness a man might come to know the ātman, independently of any external teacher or guide. By meditation or reflection, by a kind of intuition, it was possible to pass from the darkness of ignorance to the clear light of knowledge. This is sometimes conceived as a self-revelation of the ātman to the acceptable seeker after truth :— **The Brahman Unknowable**

> The wise man right within saw the ātman,
> Fastened his gaze on himself, seeking the eternal.[1]

[1] Kaṭh. 4. 1.

Not by speech, not by thought,
Not by sight is he apprehended;
'He is,' by this word is he apprehended,
And in no other way.
'He is,' thus may he be apprehended,
In so far as he is the essence of both [1];
'He is,' to the man who has thus apprehended him
His essential nature becomes manifest.[2]

Not through instruction is the ātman won,
Not through genius or much book-learning;
Only by the man whom he chooses is he comprehended;
To him the ātman reveals his essence.[3]

(3) Finally, however, it was seen that any knowledge in the ordinary sense of the word of the ātman, the self or soul, was impossible. For the ātman comprehends all in itself as the absolute, as the one and only Knower, and cannot therefore be an object of knowledge, neither is there any outside of itself by whom it might be known. All knowledge implies a duality of Knower and Known; but there is only one in the universe, *ekam evādvitīyam*,[4] self-existent and without beginning; and therefore it is self-contradictory and meaningless to assert that the Brahman can be known, or to ascribe to him attributes or qualities. This was the final conclusion of the Upanishad metaphysics, expounded chiefly in the discourses put into the mouth of Yājñavalkya in the Bṛihadāraṇyaka,[5] and significantly expressed by the denial to the ātman of all attributes, even that of existence.[6] By which of course the thinkers of the

[1] *i.e.* 'the invisible Brahman, and the visible world as coming from Brahman,' *SBE*, xv. p. 23.
[2] Kaṭh. 6. 12, 13.
[3] *ib.* 2. 23, all quoted in Deussen, p. 78 ff.
[4] *supra*, p. 264.
[5] *supra*, p. 261.
[6] *Neti, neti, supra*, p. 268.

Upanishads did not intend to convey that the ātman did not exist; they would as strenuously have denied the applicability of the predicate of non-existence. The ātman transcends both, being and not being. Or, in other words, human language and human thought are inadequate to describe or express the ultimate reality; the ātman is above and beyond all human predication. This was sometimes more poetically and fancifully expressed by ascribing directly opposite qualities to the ātman at one and the same time.[1] But the same meaning was in the mind of the writer, and prompted his apparently contradictory and impossible description.

The thought and teaching of these books therefore is essentially pantheistic. If all souls are one with Brahman, then Brahman is in everything and everything is Brahman. From this conclusion the authors did not draw back, but endeavoured to carry it to its furthest and most logical issues. There was however a distinct and not unimportant difference between the Hindu doctrine of the immanence of Brahman, if such it may be termed, and the doctrine of the Divine immanence as it has usually been formulated in the West. In form at least and in statement they stand apart, and the difference corresponds to a real distinction in mode of thought. To the Indian thinker God is not immanent in the universe as in the idealistic teaching and schools of the West. The universe is immanent in God. In him all is contained, comprehended, lives and moves and has its being, and he is greater still, and transcends all. While the former view or statement of view would seem to him to run the risks of belittling

Pantheism of the Upanishads

[1] *supra*, p. 266 ff.

the Divine, by representing it as less than and inferior to that in which it became immanent. The distinction to him was not a mere matter of words, but of the right method of regarding the true relation between the universe and Brahman.

Variety and Inconsistency of Doctrine

It is characteristic also of the teaching of these books and of Indian philosophic literature in general that the doctrines inculcated are by no means always consistent with themselves, or contain a progressive and harmonious system of thought. In part, no doubt, this is due to interpolation and confusion within the treatises themselves. But in part also to the ability of the Indian thinker to view all sides of an argument or train of reasoning at once, and to admit the validity or possibility of the validity of views and conclusions which appear to us contradictory, and to presuppose entirely different and inconsistent premisses. Something also is due to the temper and environment of the various schools in which these writings circulated. Speculations however the most diverse, which follow most widely diverging lines of thought, are here to be found. In particular all the leading systems of Indian philosophy, of which it is usual to enumerate six, trace their parentage to the Upanishads; and the lines of thought on which they will develop are here already indicated, if not distinguished or separately pursued. Thus it is an eclectic variety of thought rather than a definite scheme or system of philosophy which characterises these treatises as a whole.

Even the ātman, the highest and most abstract conception which the Upanishads employ, is made the object of this variety of conception and difference of treatment. It is by no means true that always and in all passages the ātman is

Brahman, the Absolute, the Unknown. The human ātman is differently conceived, from varying standpoints which are at times frankly materialistic. Thus three distinct ātmans or purushas are described, and their qualities set forth; elsewhere there are five, which are superimposed one upon another like sheaths or husks (*kośa*), which must in turn be stripped off in order to penetrate to the central kernel, which is *the* ātman, the only true and ultimate reality. These five are (1) the *annamaya* ātman, the ātman dependent upon food, the gross corporeal self, which is the 'I' of the ordinary unthinking and selfish man; (2) the *prāṇamaya* ātman, the ātman dependent on the breath, as the invisible but all-pervading principle of life; (3) the *manomaya* ātman, dependent on *manas*,[1] mind or will, by which is said to be intended *manas* both human and divine, self-directive energy or will, accomplishing its own purposes and controlling the entire universe; (4) *vijñānamaya* ātman, the ātman dependent on insight or knowledge, a further stage of penetration, which recognises that true knowledge is greater than work, more comprehensive and worthier than mere self-seeking will; and finally (5) *ānandamaya* ātman, the ātman dependent on bliss, the real centre of all, that cannot be known, for the highest ātman can never be an object of knowledge.

Five Different Ātmans

'Who could breathe, who could live, if that bliss (Brahman) existed not in the ether (in the heart)? For he alone creates bliss. When a man finds resting-place and peace in that invisible, incorporeal, undefined, unfathomable one, then has he attained to peace. But if he makes a distinction, a separation therein, then is there unrest for him. And it is the unrest of one who thinks himself wise.'[2]

This then was the fullest and final response which the thinkers of the Upanishads had to give to the

[1] *Manas* is a term that hardly admits of translation by a single word. It is 'mind,' not as intelligence or insight, but as determining and controlling action, and therefore corresponds more nearly to 'will' than to the abstract *mens* or *νοῦς*. It is however more than *voluntas*. It is conscious wish issuing in resolve, and taking purposive action.

[2] Taitt. ii. 7; cp. Deussen, p. 94 ff.

great question as to the source and origin of all, the ultimate principle which, self-existent and eternal, lay behind all the visible and mutable things of time. Brahman is the sole real; and Brahman is the ātman. For there cannot be two reals; there is one only. Setting out from the endeavour to interpret to themselves God and the universe, they arrived at a complete identification of the self, the soul of each. This was their answer to the human quest. And in the knowledge of this truth lay the secret of tranquillity and peace. Man was not delivered from passion and unrest by doing but by knowing. His slavery was a slavery to ignorance (*avidyā*); not indeed to ignorance in general, but ignorance of this great supreme fact, hidden from him by a thick veil until he becomes illumined, that his own soul, ātman, his real self, is not distinct from, but is identical with the universal soul, the Brahman. Then is he at rest.

Brahman Alone Real

In a striking passage Professor Paul Deussen, of Kiel, whose exposition of the Upanishad teaching is the most penetrative and sympathetic that has been published,[1] compares the thought and conclusions of the Upanishads, as a search after the truth, with those of some of the great writers and thinkers of other lands. In them he finds one of the three most serious and thoughtful attempts to solve

[1] *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, i. 2, *die Philosophie der Upanishads*, Leipzig, 1899; translated into English under the general title *Religion and Philosophy of India: The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, Edinburgh, 1906. The references are all to the English translation. The obligation under which every student of Indian thought, and not least the present writer, lies to Dr. Deussen is very great and far-reaching. Compare also his *Sechzig Upanishads des Veda*, Leipzig, 1897, a German rendering with valuable introductions and notes of all the most important treatises.

the mystery of the universe, to reach the ultimate reality that lies behind the world of phenomena and change; the other two are those of Plato and of Kant. The fundamental doctrine of all three was the same, their modes of thought complementary. And the higher teaching of the Upanishads in its relation to the *karmakāṇḍa* of the earlier Veda is compared further to the standpoint of the New Testament in regard to the doctrine of legal righteousness of the Old:—

'The Upanishads . . . are for the Veda what the New Testament is for the Bible. And this analogy is not merely external and accidental, but is fundamental and based upon a universal law of development of the religious life which is acknowledged on both sides.

. . . . . .

'Both the Old Testament and the *karmakāṇḍa* of the Veda proclaim a law, and hold out the prospect of reward for its observance and of punishment for its transgression. And if the Indian theory has the advantage of being able to defer retribution in part to the future, and by that means to relieve the conflict with experience that raises so many difficulties for the Old Testament doctrine of a retribution limited to this world; it is, on the other hand, the distinguishing characteristic of the Biblical law of righteousness that it pays less regard than the Indian to ritual prescriptions, and in their place lays greater stress on a habitually blameless course of life.

. . . . . .

'The recognition of this (of the failure from a moral point of view of the doctrine of justification by works) is seen in the New Testament teaching of the worthlessness of all works, even those that are good, and in the corresponding Upanishad doctrine that altogether rejects works. Both make salvation dependent not on anything done or left undone, but on a complete transformation of the natural man as a whole. Both regard this transformation as a release from the bonds of this all-embracing empirical reality, which has its roots in egotism.

'Why then do we need a release from this existence? Because it is the realm of sin is the reply of the Bible. The Veda answers, Because it is the realm of ignorance. The former sees depravity in the volitional, the latter in the intellectual side of human nature. The Bible demands a change of the will, the Veda of the understanding. On which side does the truth lie? If man were pure will or pure

intelligence, we should have to decide for one or the other alternative. But since he is a being who both wills and knows, the great change upon which the Bible and the Veda alike make salvation depend must be realised in both departments of his life.

. . . . . .

'As surely however as . . . the will and not the intellect is the centre of a man's nature, so surely must the pre-eminence be assigned to Christianity, in that its demand for a renewal of the will is peculiarly vital and essential. But as certainly as man is not mere will, but intellect besides, so certainly will that Christian renewal of the will make itself manifest on the other side as a renewal of knowledge, just as the Upanishads teach. . . . As in this case, so at every point of the system. The New Testament and the Upanishads, these two noblest products of the religious consciousness of mankind, are found when we sound their deeper meaning to be nowhere in irreconcilable contradiction, but in a manner the most attractive serve to elucidate and complete one another.'[1]

Brahman and the Universe

The further question that demanded attention was the relation of Brahman to the visible phenomenal universe; and in regard to this also various lines of thought and speculation may be traced in the Upanishads. The difficulty was the old one, to resolve the apparent contradiction between the conclusions of abstract theory or reasoning, and the obvious facts or seeming facts of daily experience. The human ātman, or *jīvātman* as it was sometimes called for the sake of distinction from the *paramātman*, the universal soul, was identical with the Supreme, with Brahman; and this identity is the most absolute and far-reaching conclusion of thought, and to know this is the foundation and essence of all wisdom. Elsewhere, however, there is conceded to the ātman a measure

[1] Deussen, p. 46 ff

of freedom and individuality of its own, for it is represented as thinking and willing, and promotes of its own free and enlightened will its return into the bosom of the paramātman. Moreover by intense meditation, by self-abstraction from all care and all thought, man may gain power over his own ātman, and may thus bring himself into conscious union with the eternal source of all. On these last lines a real if undeveloped theism may be traced in the Upanishads, principally in the later treatises, and especially in the S'vetāś-vatara. Originally independent of the true ātman doctrine and probably of the ancient Vedic speculation and literature as a whole, it was never fully harmonized or brought into any real living relation with it. On the other hand, there were those who, though they denied the absolute and real existence of the jīvātman, yet allowed to it a kind of relative practical existence. And between the human ātman, thus conceived, and the great universal soul there was interposed a personal god, *Īśvara*,[1] ruler of the world but distinct both from it and from the paramātman, and serving in some sort as intermediary between them.

The final and complete resolution of the difficulty, however, which the authors offered was true to idealism, and to the main teaching of the Upanishads. Brahman alone is real. The visible material universe is unreal, is *māyā*, illusion; it seems to be, but is not. Only Brahman

Māyā

[1] In the Vedic books the universal term for god is *deva*. The fact that the Upanishads employ the word *īśvara*, 'ruler,' for the supreme god of their theistic teaching seems to show that the latter was derived from some other source than the ancient religion of the Brāhmans,—probably from the popular and unsystematized beliefs of the common people.

really exists; all else, the universe and all that is therein are illusory, a shadow and a show.[1] And thus was formulated in India and expounded a notable doctrine which has overshadowed all later Hindu thought. It appears first in the S'vetāś-vatara Upanishad, where so many conflicting trains of thought find expression. In itself however, and apart from its late literary expression, the doctrine is of much older date, and is indeed a necessary corollary of the teaching concerning the sole existence of Brahman. In the mythology *Māyā* is the mother of Death, and is somewhat strangely said to have been from all eternity. This also is a truth, to have learned which is to have become indeed wise. All these various forms of doctrine foreshadowed or outlined in the Upanishads reappear in definite and more or less organised form in the great systems of Indian philosophy.

Theistic Speculation

On the side of theism also there was a not inconsiderable development of speculative thought, which, assuming the reality and independence both of the individual soul and of the external universe, endeavoured on the one hand to determine the relation of the soul to God in respect of its freedom and capacity of initiative and will; and on the other expounded an elaborate and fanciful cosmology, which detailed the manner and order of the creation of the universe, and finally with a return to pantheistic conceptions described how the supreme Creator, having fashioned the world, then entered into it and himself became this universe.[2] Thus non-dualism

[1] Cp. Deussen, *Elements of Metaphysic*, p. 324 f. :—'This idea of the world as a place of shadows not of reality is found alike in S'ankarāchārya, Plato, and Kant.'

[2] Taitt. ii. 6, Bṛihad. i. 4. 7, 10, etc.; Deussen, p. 180 ff.

triumphed; and the whole theistic idea, together with the associated mythology, has as it were a background of idealism, which suggests that these things after all are only a shadow of reality, it is all *māyā*, a concession to the capacities and weaknesses of human nature, but the ātman alone is real.

As with the cosmology of the Upanishads, so also with their psychology, if such it may be called. Originally independent and derived from a different source, it is accommodated to the ātman doctrine and made to subserve its ends. There is elaborated a theory of the soul, and of its state or condition here and hereafter, which with more or less difficulty, and in part at least obviously as an afterthought, is made to harmonize with the supremacy and absoluteness of the teaching concerning the ātman.

Psychology of the Upanishads: States of the Soul

There are four states of the soul, representing a gradual progress or advance from the lowest materialistic view of its nature and constitution to the highest metaphysical conception, which is the final word of the Upanishads respecting the ātman. The four states are those of (1) waking; (2) sleeping, in which the soul is active in dreams; (3) deep dreamless sleep, *sushupti*, *sushupta*; (4) the 'fourth' state, *turīya*, *turya*, *ćaturtha*, which is more or less artificial, and was perhaps invented mainly in order to make the number correspond with the four āśramas; it does not occur in the older Upanishads. They may be compared with the four states or attitudes of the European mystics.[1] The three earlier stages also have mystical names,—*vaiśvānara*, that which is common to all, or present to all men; *taijasa*, luminous or intense; and *prājña*, intelligent.

(1) The first is the ordinary state of the natural man, who without reflection takes the universe as he finds it and believes it to be real. The name *vaiśvānara* is given apparently

[1] *e.g.* St. Teresa, in W. R. Inge, *Mysticism*, p. 220 f.

because to all such men the same physical world is presented to their senses.

(2) In dream-sleep the soul fashions its own world in the imagery of its dreams, and each dreamer has a world of his own. The distinction between knower and known, between subject and object, is still maintained, and each thinks that the universe he sees in his dreams is real; 'the spirit serves as light for itself.'[1] Elsewhere in the sleep of dreams the spirit is represented as leaving the body and wandering about, returning sometimes with difficulty at the appointed time.

(3) The deep dreamless sleep is that in which all separate consciousness of knowing subject and known object is lost, the human spirit is one with the eternal Knower, the supreme Intelligence, *prājña ātman*. 'When a man has fallen so sound asleep, and has so completely and perfectly been lulled to rest that he knows no dream-image, that is the Self, that is the immortal, the fearless, that is Brahman.'[2] The earlier treatises seem to recognise only these three states, and the third is the consummation of bliss in union with Brahman. When a fourth state was added, then emphasis was laid on the transitory nature of the unconsciousness of deep sleep; in its waking hours the spirit falls back again into the anxious troubled condition of the man who does not know, but who regards the universe as a real object of knowledge.

(4) 'When the three states named have ceased, and the spiritual subsists alone by itself, contrasted like a spectator with all existing things as a substance undifferentiated, set free from all existing things, this spiritual state is called the turiya.'[3] The union with Brahman remains unbroken even though periods of active consciousness and life in the world supervene on the unconsciousness of deep sleep. The ātman is permanently one with the Eternal, and is not liable to return to a lower state.[4]

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[1] Bṛihad. iv. 3. 9.

[2] C'hānd. viii. 11. 1; cp. Bṛihad. iv. 3. 21 ff.

[3] Sarvop. 8, cp. Māṇḍ. 7, Maitr. 6. 19, 7. 11.

[4] On the states of the soul, see esp. Deussen, p. 296 ff., and the references there given. In his judgement the introduction of the fourth stage was connected with yoga doctrines, and the practices of intense meditation, abstinence, etc., by which it was believed that a man could control his own spirit, and thereby union with the supreme eternal spirit might be secured.

Thus of the many strands of speculative thought which the Upanishads contain the loftiest and that which constitutes the final word of these treatises on the problem of being is idealistic. The Brahman alone is real, the phenomenal universe with all the objects of the senses is unreal, is māyā. This is the fundamental standpoint of the writers and thinkers, and in the philosophic system of the Vedānta[1] it has inwrought itself into the fibre of Indian mental and spiritual life, and has become the heritage and possession of the field labourer and villager hardly less than of the scholar and Brāhman. To know this great truth constitutes in itself deliverance from that which to the Hindu is the most urgent and threatening of all evils, perpetuated existence in the cycle of re-births (*saṁsāra*) upon earth. When he has realised that his ātman is one with Brahman, and that all else is illusion, then is he delivered from apprehension, from pain, and from death. Salvation therefore from the point of view of the Upanishads and the later Vedānta is not the acquisition of any new thing, or the endowment with any new capacity or right. It is simply the recognition of an already existing fact, the removal of the veil of ignorance which concealed the eternal truth.[2]

Idealism the Final Word of the Upanishads

Unpractical and barren theory or speculation however is not all that is to be found in the Upanishads. If it were, beyond the general interest of the bearing and growth of human thought there

[1] *infra*, p. 313 ff.

[2] The best summary of Upanishad teaching is contained in the closing chapter of Dr. Deussen's book, 'Retrospect of the Upanishads and their Teaching'; cp. Macdonell, p. 218 ff.; Barth, p. 64 ff.; *al.*

would be little to invite study. There is however in this literature a considerable element of earnest religious teaching of exhortations to morality and devotion, of commendation of a life of self-denial lived in soberness and the love of the truth. Beyond a doubt it is this ethical content that has given to the Upanishads their unique position in the history of religious thought in India, and has made them the most widely influential of the sacred books of the Hindus. Rāmmohun Roy, perhaps the greatest and most enlightened of native Indian reformers, declared that in his judgement a selection from the Upanishads, published and largely circulated, would contribute more than anything else to the moral and religious elevation of his fellow countrymen. These books as they have come down to us with the teaching which they convey are all that has survived of the literary output of those schools of ethical and spiritual thought from which Buddhism has derived the precepts of moral law and conduct which have been so justly commended. The ethical teaching however, while its presuppositions are theistic, is in all cases linked, and more or less fully harmonized with the idealistic doctrine of the ātman.

Ethics of the Upanishads : Ignorance ; the Future Life

The individual soul finds itself existing in a state of separation from the great Universal Soul, to which it belongs, and from which it has originally come forth. This alienation is the source and cause of all moral evil, as well as of all intellectual darkness and error. The soul of man is entangled in the world of matter, involved in a ceaseless round of changes and re-births, the *saṁsāra* or cycle of existences, deliverance from which with its necessary attendance

of ignorance and misery can only be attained by union with the Supreme. Evil is traced to ignorance; and ignorance culminates or is summed up in the delusion of the human spirit, which fails to know itself as one with the *paramātman*, the great spirit of the universe. This doctrine of the *saṁsāra* is here first fully expounded; and as one of the most characteristic developments of Hindu philosophy and belief, it underlies and gives distinctive colour to all forms of Hindu religious thought. A similar doctrine is found in the Brāhmaṇas, but with an important difference. In these earlier treatises to be born again in a new body is a punishment for wrong-doing in a former existence. Here it is the natural and inevitable result of action of any kind, good or bad; and all that, theoretically at least, can be achieved by just and righteous dealing is to ensure that the next life shall be in a higher form and under more desirable conditions than the last, a step upwards in the scale of being. If therefore to this theory of *punarbhava*, of the incessant inevitable transmigration of souls, there be joined the teaching that every man's lot in a given state of existence is determined by the sum-total of his deeds in former lives,—the great doctrine of *karma*, of action,—we have the two fundamental articles of the creed of a devout follower of the Upanishads. To escape from this vicious circle, or in other words to cease to be born again and again, is the supreme object of his desire. And this deliverance can only be attained through the cessation of his personal individual existence, the union of the soul with the supreme Brahman.

Hence on their practical and devotional side the Upanishads give themselves up to teaching the way of salvation through *yoga*, or union with the one

absolute being. As long as action continues, of necessity its fruit continues also; and this fruit issues in re-birth into another state of existence. Abandon all action therefore, and the separate life of the soul will come to an end, it will reach its natural home in an unconscious eternal union with God. Accordingly the morality of these books is rather negative than positive.[1] It has been well termed a 'morality of renunciation.'[1] Abstinence is the highest good, abstinence from deed, from word, even from thought. And the ideal of a devout life is that of the *sannyāsin*, the recluse or ascetic, who renounces everything, withdraws himself from every occupation, and is absorbed in a meditation that becomes perfect when the mind can meditate on nothing.[2] Somewhat later in time, and especially in connection with the Yoga system of philosophy, dreams and visions,

Yoga

[1] Barth, p. 79.

[2] Cp. *Bhag. Gītā*, ch. vi. :—'A devotee should constantly devote his self to abstraction, remaining in a secret place, alone, with his mind and self restrained, without expectations and without belongings. . . . Thus constantly devoting his self to abstraction, a devotee whose mind is restrained attains that tranquillity which culminates in final emancipation and assimilation with me (i.e. *Kri*shṇa, the deity). . . . Abandoning without exception all desires . . . one should by slow steps become quiescent, with a firm resolve coupled with courage; and fixing the mind upon the self, should think of nothing.'—*SBE*, vol. viii.[2] p. 68 ff. It is a curious illustration of the contradictory or apparently contradictory theories that find a place in these books that elsewhere in the *Bhagavad Gītā* a strenuous and active life is eulogized :—'A man does not attain freedom from action merely by not engaging in action; nor does he attain perfection by mere renunciation. . . . Do you perform prescribed action, for action is better than inaction,' etc. 'Renunciation and pursuit of action are both instruments of happiness; but of the two, pursuit of action is superior to renunciation of action.' *Op. cit.*, pp. 52 ff., 63; cp. *ibid.*, pp. 59, 67.

unusual or ecstatic conditions of mind, were regarded as evidences of this union with the one absolute being, either attained or in course of attainment; and rules were given for the production of such states. The path therefore to final and complete blessedness lay in the renunciation and avoidance of all action whether of the body or mind. The claim is repeatedly made that this condition has actually been realised in practice. And it has always remained in India the ideal of the highest life.

It is again true that formal and adequate illustrations drawn from the Upanishads are not readily given; the moral teaching is so closely wedded to philosophical theory that it does not easily lend itself to separate statement. The following is from the C'hāndogya Upanishad:—

Ethical Precepts

There are three branches of the law. Sacrifice, study, and charity are the first.

Austerity the second, and to dwell as a Brahmaćārin[1] in the house of a tutor, always mortifying the body in the house of a tutor, is the third. All these obtain the worlds of the blessed; but the Brahmasaṁstha alone (he who is firmly grounded in Brahman) obtains immortality.[2]

The threefold descendants of Prajāpati, gods men and Asuras (evil spirits), dwelt as Brahmaćārins with their father Prajāpati. Having finished their studentship the gods said: 'Tell us something, Sir.' He told them the syllable Da. Then he said: 'Did you understand?' They said: 'We did understand. You told us "Dāmyata," Be subdued.' 'Yes,' he said, 'you have understood.'

Then the men said to him: 'Tell us something, Sir.' He told them the same syllable Da. Then he said: 'Did you

[1] Student of religion, or of the Veda.

[2] *C'hānd. Up.* ii. 23. 1, 2, *SBE* i. p. 35; cp. the doctrine of the four āśramas, *infra*, p. 331 ff; the Brahmasaṁstha is the sannyāsin.

understand?' They said: 'We did understand. You told us "Datta," Give.' 'Yes,' he said, 'you have understood.'

Then the Asuras said to him: 'Tell us something, Sir.' He told them the same syllable Da. Then he said: 'Did you understand?' They said: 'We did understand. You told us "Dayadham," Be merciful.' 'Yes,' he said, 'you have understood.'

The divine voice of thunder repeats the same, Da Da Da, that is Be subdued, Give, Be merciful. Therefore let that triad be taught, Subduing, Giving, and Mercy.[1]

Religious and Ethical Defects

In many respects, however, the creed of the Upanishads in its fundamental and abstract form appears to present a cheerless and unpromising aspect; it tends to stagnation and atrophy of the faculties of the soul and body, and offers personal extinction as its goal. Not without reason then is the lack of inspiration and hope and of stimulus to progress in his religious faith to a great extent held chargeable for the strongly marked tinge of melancholy that runs through all Hindu life and character. At the same time it ought to be remembered again that theory and practice by no means always or necessarily went hand in hand; that these doctrines were perhaps largely speculative, and influenced less than we are apt to imagine the lives of those who professed them. There have never failed, however, in India instances not a few of men who have sincerely and completely put into practice the rules of self-abnegation and renunciation which their sacred books teach. On the other hand, even at so early a period as this, a free-thinking scepticism did not fail to make its voice heard. And its votaries, so far from practising asceticism, appear to have acted consistently up to

[1] *Bṛihad. Up.* v. 2, *SBE* xv. p. 189 f.; cp. Deussen, p. 365.

the old Epicurean maxim, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' [1]

Karma and Transmigration

The doctrine of transmigration or metempsychosis in its most complete form is widely, practically universally accepted in India, and has been handed down from very remote times. The belief itself in a more or less modified and restricted form is common among savage tribes; and it was probably from this source, from the aboriginal peoples whom the Āryans found dwelling in the land and with whom they intermingled, that the doctrine was taken over, and came to form a part of the religious faith of the conquerors. It does not appear in the older literature, whose eschatological teaching is comparatively limited and undefined. But it finds a place in the oldest Upanishads, where it has already attained its fullest expression; from this, its most consistent and highest form, there is no retrogression, nor does any further development appear conceivable. It seems probable therefore that the Āryans adopted it in its entirety from without, and incorporated it without change into the circle of their own religious beliefs. Buddhism also is a

[1] They were known as *Nāstikas*, unbelievers, those who say *nāsti*, 'it is not.' Their successors are to be found in India at the present day. Compare the account given to Mr. Oakley by the native Pandit:—'There are many of these Nāstiks, or atheistic philosophers, who attribute everything to chance, in Kumaon and Garhwal. They observe no sacred days. They say a tree has many leaves, which all fall in autumn, but the same leaves will not grow next spring; so men are like leaves that flourish and decay, and their memory is lost' (E. S. Oakley, *Holy Himālaya*, London, 1905, p. 267).

witness to the early existence of the doctrine in India. Others however have supposed that the doctrine did in fact form part of the body of primitive Āryan belief, but was developed and brought to perfection within a different school and under different conditions from those in which the older literature found expression, and only met with general acceptance in the era of the Upanishads and among the teachers of a more complete and systematic doctrine of the future life.

In the Rigveda only slight indications are given of the fate of the soul after death, and it is evident that the conditions and requirements of the future received little attention compared with those of the present. The good pass into a state of bliss with the gods; the wicked are consigned to their doom in a realm of darkness. No information is given as to the duration of the future existence or its final issue. In the literature of the Brāhmaṇas, and especially in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the future destiny of the soul is still completed in another world than this, but it is more definitely retributive; each man receives a lot and degree of happiness or misery according to his deserts. In the final transmigration theory of the Upanishads this world and not another is the sphere of all future life. Retribution is operative upon earth, and the measure of recompense after death is exactly and as it were mechanically proportioned to merit or demerit during life. The sum-total of the 'fruits' of a man's deeds, his *karma* throughout all his previous existences, determines with absolute and inexorable precision what his future condition will be. He has therefore only himself to blame for his suffering; it is the deserved requital for the evil which he has himself wrought. And on the other hand comfort and happiness are

his as a just reward for the virtue which he has practised in an earlier life. Nor is there any escape from the perpetual round of existence and the iron law of *karma* except for the wise man by union with the Supreme, with Brahman. The recurrent cycle is as enduring in the future as it has been endlessly working itself out in the past.

Two conceptions therefore were involved in the Indian doctrine of transmigration, which were originally distinct, and in all probability entirely independent, belonging to a different order of ideas. The thought of a return of the soul to the earth, to inhabit another human or animal body, or even that of an insect or plant, is common to nearly all primitive peoples and is undoubtedly of great antiquity. The other thought, of a recompense in another world for the deeds done in this, is neither so widespread nor so old; and where it is accepted, it has usually been as an alternative to the earlier view of the soul's future destiny superseding or displacing but not amalgamating with it. The combination was effected in India by transferring the retribution from a future and unknown world to the known present, and making the amount of the recompense precisely equivalent to that which the deeds of the individual man deserve and have determined. Hence to a greater degree and more forcefully than can perhaps be found elsewhere the Indian doctrine of *karma* and transmigration fixes personal responsibility. 'Fate' is not a tremendous unseen power, which sports with a man's destiny, against which it is vain to struggle, and useless to repine. It is as it were the personification of the man himself, as he has been and as he has done. He is himself alone responsible for all that befalls him; and he has in his own hands the moulding of his own

future lot, for good or for evil, for happiness or for misery.

Doctrine of the Two Paths

The later element in the theory, that of a recompense to be received in another world, was further elaborated in the doctrine of the two paths, the *devayāna* and the *pitṛiyāna*, the way of the gods and the way of the fathers, which the souls of the dead pursue after their departure from this world to a future abode of happiness or misery. The parallelism between the two roads was drawn out at length, with great subtlety and elaboration, and the Indian doctrine on this subject, carried by wandering travellers and teachers, contributed to influence, if it did not altogether originate similar theories in later Asiatic and European forms of religious belief, as for instance the Mithraic doctrine of the ascent of the soul to the highest heaven.[1] The former conception, that of the *devayāna*, is found as early as the Rigveda, where it is first the path by which Agni bears the offerings to the gods, and by which also the gods themselves descend to partake of the sacrifices, or it is the road by which the good ascend through progressive stages or 'stations' until they reach the highest felicity in Brahman.[2] The *pitṛiyāna* is the way of darkness, and is described with analogous but contrary stations, *e.g.* for the light half of the moon the dark half is substituted. The latter part of the progress on this way differs, and does not reach the sun but terminates in the moon, where the dead remain as long as their karma is unexhausted, after which they return to earth.[3]

[1] F. Cumont, *Mysteries of Mithra*, London, 1903, who refers to Bossuet, *Die Himmelreise der Seele*, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, vol. iv., 1901, p. 160 ff.

[2] The stages as given in C'hāndogya iv. 15. 5 f. are light (*arćis*, brightness, *i.e.* of the funeral fire), day, light half of the moon, six months of the sun's northward movement, year, sun, moon, lightning, thence to Brahman; and it is added that 'those who proceed on that path (of the Devas) do not return to the life of man, yea they do not return.' Cp. *ib.* v. 10. 1 f., Bṛihad. vi. 2. 15.

[3] C'hānd. v. 10. 3 ff., cp. 7, Bṛihad. vi. 2. 16, Kaush. i. 2, 3; cp. Deussen, p. 334 ff., Macdonell, p. 224 f.

The doctrine of future existence as thus formulated and accepted has left a deep impression upon the Indian character and life as a whole. On the more passive side it shows itself in the spirit of patience under suffering and calamity, of absence of murmuring, and readiness to accept the changes and losses of life as part of a deserved discipline, which has not been imposed from without, but is the inevitable result of actions and a course of life for which the individual himself is alone responsible. On the other hand, its less desirable effects are seen in the inability or refusal to rise above circumstances, a disposition to rest content with things as they are, an easy and languid acceptance of the inevitable, manifesting itself in inertia and a reluctance to make the necessary personal exertion to modify or remove adverse conditions. In its more extreme forms this spirit tends to pessimism, and there is a deep strain of pessimism in the Hindu character, for which, in large part at least, the theory of an unchanging law of *karma* and transmigration is accountable. Mainly to the same origin also should be traced the Indian tenderness to all life; living creatures of every kind are sacred and must not be injured, ultimately because the spirits of ancestors may have their home within their bodies, and in depriving them of life might conceivably be incurred the guilt of slaying a parent, friend, or other deceased member within the circle of kinship.

Influence of Transmigration Doctrine: its Defects

It is moreover not difficult to understand why the doctrine should make so strong an appeal to the thought of the people, and command so entirely their faith. And the fact that in a more or less modified form the theory of transmigration has been

widely held, not only in India but in all parts of the world, proves that it responds to a deeply felt need of the human consciousness and heart. As taught in India it professes to set forth a complete *theodicy*, a vindication of the reasonableness and justice of present conditions, and a satisfying explanation of the apparent anomalies in the distribution of happiness and misery, of riches or want, of high or low station, at any given moment of the world's history. The virtuous man suffers because in an earlier birth he has been vicious; and in the minutest detail as well as in the whole his suffering is *pro rata* of his wrong-doing. So also the wicked man prospers not because of his wickedness, but in spite of it, and reaps now the reward of his good deeds in the past. The defects of the theory, which are fatal to its claim to be an adequate and complete explanation of the facts of life, are mainly two. In the first place it takes no account of mutual influence. It is not true, for example, that a man's misery is entirely self-caused, either by his own actions in the present life, or by what he may conceivably have done or left undone in a series of previous existences. There is the complicated effect of the actions of others of which account must be taken. Frequently and patently he suffers because others do or have done wrong, just as his own evil actions do not hurt himself alone, but his neighbours also and his friends, or on a larger scale the entire community or nation. Mutual relations and influences play so large and decisive a part in human life that no theory can be satisfactory or complete which practically ignores them. And secondly, while present conditions are at each instant explained as the direct and inevitable consequences of the past, no attempt is made to trace these conditions and their succession to an

ultimate source. The law of karma determines all. Of karma itself however no explanation is given; nor is it shown how karma began to be. Thus there is as it were a perpetual recession backwards, each step of which is explained, but no resting-place or beginning is assigned, or indeed on the postulates of the theory seems assignable. And although an end in the future is declared, in individual union with Brahman, such teaching is obviously brought in from without, not deduced from the premisses of the karma and transmigration doctrine; which logically points to as interminable a progression in the future, without discernible or possible goal, as it requires for the explanation of history in the past.[1]

BRĀHMANISM

Variety and Comprehensiveness of Hinduism

With the Upanishads the survey of the early sacred literature comes to its natural conclusion. The later epic and popular literature is of equal if not greater importance for the religious faith of the majority of the people, who concern themselves with the practical needs of life, and not with the theories of the philosophers. But it is in these Vedic writings, beginning with the hymns

[1] The literature of the subject is very considerable. It is discussed by all writers on Indian religious thought, and by most who have taken as their theme the early beliefs of mankind. See Barth, p. 77 f.; Max Müller, *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (1899), p. 137 f.; Deussen, p. 324 ff., and *Sechzig Upanishads*, p. 137 ff.; arts. by G. A. Grierson and others in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 397 ff., 1908, p. 337 ff., and on 'Pythagoras and the Doctrine of Transmigration' by A. B. Keith, *ib.* 1909, p. 569 ff.;

of the Rigveda and including the later treatises of the Upanishads, that there has been preserved with more or less fidelity a record of the primitive beliefs, the mythology, the ritual, and the speculations of the Hindus. These form the original source from which, with many accretions from without, have been developed all the manifold forms of Indian religions and philosophies at the present day. The period of growth has been long, and the results reached are often as widely divergent from the first principles as it is possible to conceive. But the root of the matter is there, however overlaid it may be or contaminated by outside influences. It is however misleading and except in a very limited sense incorrect to speak of a Hindu religion, whether as contained in sacred books, built up upon these as a foundation, or more or less independently elaborated from native and non-literary sources. There is no Hindu creed, no defined or definable body of doctrines or practices, accepted by all alike. There is only an assemblage of varying, not seldom contradictory beliefs, held with greater or less tenacity, evolved and incompletely harmonized under unequal conditions by men whose mental outlook and dispositions were widely divergent, and profoundly modified by all manner of external influences, indigenous and foreign. The history of Hinduism,—to use the term for want of a better,—has been a continuous history of absorption and assimilation, as well as of internal growth and progress. And the contest still maintained in India between rival creeds is on the part of the native religion of the country carried on by old methods, wherein Hinduism

F. B. Jevons, *Introd. to the History of Religion*[4], chap. xxii.; E. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, ii. pp. 500, 693, 709 ff.; and the relevant arts. in the encyclopaedias.

attempts to repeat on a larger scale the process that has been so successful in the past, to disarm or to destroy by a broad scheme of comprehension, and to enrich her pantheon with the adopted gods of her sometime foes.

The name of *Brāhmanism* is usually and conveniently given to this earliest form of Indian religious observance derived from the ancient literature, while the term *Hinduism* is confined to later and modern developments. Brāhmanism, founded on these sacred books and claiming to fulfil their precepts, is the religion of *Brahmā*, the Creator, or of the *Brāhmans*, the priestly and privileged class, charged with the preservation of doctrine and the maintenance of the rites. A further classification has sometimes been made into the four phases or sub-divisions of Ritualistic, Philosophical, Mythological, and Nomistic Brāhmanism.[1] As an aid to memory such an arrangement may be, and in practice is helpful; but it has of course no justification in the usage of the Hindus themselves. In Eastern beliefs and forms of worship, hard and fast lines of separation can rarely be drawn. The different classes shade off imperceptibly into one another, and borrow from one another ideas and technical expressions; they are neither mutually exclusive nor orderly in a European sense of the term in their chronological development. Ritualistic Brāhmanism, however, is understood to express that phase or aspect of the priestly religion which occupied itself with sacrifices and rites and ceremonies. Philosophical Brāhmanism, neglecting and partly despising external observance, speculated widely and profoundly on all manner of themes, with

Brāhmanism

[1] Monier-Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*[4], pp. 21 ff.

results formulated chiefly in the Upanishads. Mythological Brāhmanism adopted a rich and imaginative popular mythology with its legends and fairy-tales of gods and goddesses and heroes, an exhaustless supply of which the Indian countryside has always afforded; taking under its protection especially the great epic poems, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmayaṇa*,[1] with the extensive popular literature of the same class. Thus Mythological Brāhmanism approaches nearest to the every-day creed of the majority of the natives of India at the present time. Whether such a specialised form of Brāhmanism as this, detached from or in any sense independent of the ritual and philosophy, ever in reality existed may be open to question.

Finally there was Nomistic Brāhmanism, the creed or cult that concerned itself with *νόμος* or law, and whose text-books were the great *dharmaśāstras*, or law-codes, containing the detailed rules for Brāhmanical practice in ritual and daily life. Of these books the most widely known and reverenced was the Code of Manu, which, originally the private code of a sect or tribe of Brāhmans called Mānavas, living probably in a district of the North-West Provinces, won its way to general acceptance throughout the whole of India.[2]

Brāhmanism, then, is the general and somewhat indefinite name for the earliest form or forms into which the religious conceptions of the Veda and succeeding writings crystallized; of which, both as concerned doctrine and practice, the hereditary caste of the Brāhmans became the sole priests and trustees, and which in turn gave

The Brāhman Caste

[1] *infra*, p. 333 ff.

[2] Cp. *infra*, p. 338 ff.

to them unrivalled cohesion and strength, enabling them to triumph over all opponents and to secure for the members of their caste undisputed power and prestige. It was a significant and important advance upon primitive nature worship, and itself became the foundation and strength of the highly elaborated and complex systems of later times. The formal laws of its religious observance were laid down in the Brāhmaṇas, the ritualistic treatises already considered; its philosophy found expression in the Upanishads; its mythology and legal enactments in epic poems and dharmaśāstras. The historical importance however of the system does not rest exclusively or even mainly upon any of these; but upon its practical consequences in the establishment of a caste domination of unparalleled efficiency and permanence. This importance is indicated in the very name which has been given to the creed. *Brāhmanism* is so called as being the possession of the *Brāhmans*,[1] the authorised exponents of the religion of Brahmā, and the sole depositories of the sacred lore which taught concerning the gods. This deposit they guarded with jealous care, and defended successfully against the

[1] *Brāhmaṇa* (Brāhman) as a name for a member of the first caste only occurs, according to Prof. Macdonell, eight times in the Rigveda, while Brahman with the meaning of sage or officiating priest is relatively frequent (forty-six times, *Sanskr. Lit.*, p. 161 f.). See Geldner, *Rigveda in Auswahl*, i. p. 122 f. The inference would appear to be that in the narrower technical sense the term was not clearly differentiated and set apart at so early a date. The usage of the hymns is perhaps hardly conclusive, however, since the poets were not concerned with the ritual and the names or titles of its officers. Cp. also Max Müller, *Anc. Sanskr. Lit.*[2], 122, 468 ff., and *ERE*, vol. ii. *s.v.* brahman, p. 798. According to one tradition there was a special relation between the Atharvaveda and the Brāhman priesthood, *supra* p. 202.

unhallowed touch of a man of alien caste. Their unique and privileged knowledge of things divine, their position as the sole intermediaries between God and man, became the foundation of their caste strength, and the lever by which they succeeded in removing all obstacles to their own undisputed supremacy. Thus the earliest dawn of history reveals the Brāhmans as a caste gradually asserting their authority over the other castes, and arrogating to themselves as their peculiar heritage rights and privileges which others had originally shared with them.

Brahmā

The supreme object of this worship, nominally at least, was Brahmā. To him, as the primary source and final end of all, the other gods as well as men were subject. There is here again a certain advance in religious thought, and a change in the religious standpoint, which indicates that the process of reconciliation of different views was going on, and a characteristic attempt was being made to harmonize all practice and speculation in one universally comprehensive system. The ancient deities of the Veda, especially Prajāpati, suffered loss of rank and prestige, and their place was taken by a new personification. This was *Brahmā*, masculine, the Creator and Father of all, who is the old *Brahma*, neuter, *paramātman*, the first principle, primeval and all-pervading soul of the universe, brought forward into the light, and clothed with a living personality and attributes. Even so he has never been more than half-defined and realised—a working force rather than an intelligent ruler; and therefore in his turn has been dispossessed by figures in the pantheon more vividly pictured and conceived, until at the present day there is only one temple exclusively

dedicated to his worship in the whole of India.[1] And while the rites of his service are described with much minuteness in some of the later books, they would seem never to have been very widely reduced to practice.

Changes and Modifications

Apparently from the very beginning, and for a considerable period thereafter, the creed of Brāhmanism found itself on its defence against so-called sectarian or popular beliefs, springing up or already existing by its side, and challenging its claim to universal acceptance and homage. These beliefs were for the most part entirely rudimentary and unformed, with no pretensions to the dignity of ecclesiastical systems; and therefore the more readily succumbed to the concerted efforts of Brāhmanical orthodoxy, or were adopted within the elastic bounds of its theology and ritual. The chief organised and successful opposition was offered by Buddhism, of early Brāhmanism unquestionably the most formidable rival, the history of whose profound and lasting influence upon contemporary faiths has yet to be written. With the exception of Jainism, others were in their origin mainly forms of nature or fetich worship belonging to non-Āryan tribes, which yet were effective in largely modifying or enriching Brāhmanism with their own peculiar rites and deities. It is a proof of the marvellous strength and vitality of Brāhman faith that it has survived all these attacks, assimilated to itself all these diverse elements, and to-day remains, transformed indeed

[1] At Pushkar, near the town of Ajmīr, in Rājputāna. See Barth, pp. 92, 93; *IGI*[3], *s.v.* There are a few other shrines that bear his name, one of which is found in the far south of India, in Malabar.

but recognisable, the foundation and essence of every variety of Hindu belief.

To trace the history of these changes, or to assign a precise value to each element in the total result, is in many, perhaps in most instances beyond our power. The attempt so to trace them would be worth making, and the conclusions would be of the greatest interest; it would involve, however, a minute study of Indian religions in their history and popular literature, and could only be presented in a work of considerable importance and size. It is difficult in general to determine even approximately the time and place of the introduction of innovations, or the disuse of practices long sanctioned by custom or authority. Here a brief statement must suffice of some of the most striking modifications in observance and faith accepted under the pressure of foreign conceptions or usages. Such a statement is of value rather as illustrating the contrast between past and present, than as marking periods of growth or development.

(1) In the most ancient books there is no mention of pilgrimages, or ablutions in sacred streams, as efficacious to procure merit or cleanse from sin. Under present conditions these form a large part of the religious duties of every pious Hindu.

(2) The elaborate system of caste, by which Hindu society is minutely sub-divided, is unknown in the Vedic period. Even the orthodox theory of the four castes as formulated by Manu is strange to the hymns, which recognise apparently not caste, but only two *varṇas*, *ārya* and *dāsa*, noble and barbarian.[1]

(3) In the orthodox writings Brāhmans are prohibited from serving in connection with temples

[1] *e.g.* Rigveda, v. 34. 6, x. 83, cp. *supra*, p. 251.

or idols. On the other hand, it is now rare to find a non-Brāhman in any of the higher offices at least associated with temple duties or worship.

(4) Living sacrifices, which hold so important a place in Vedic ritual, have gradually been superseded by offerings of flour paste etc., often moulded into animal shape. There is evidence that the great sacrifices were observed at least occasionally as late as about the eighth century of our era. Since that period they have been rare, and for the most part and in most districts have for some time altogether ceased.[1] Gifts to Brāhmans have come to be a surer as well as an easier means of obtaining the favour of the gods than the most costly and elaborate sacrifices.

(5) The practice of *satī*,[2] or as it is more properly termed *sahamaraṇa*, that the widow should burn herself on the funeral pyre of her late husband, finds no place or sanction in the most ancient sacred literature. Instances are said still to occur in distant and isolated parts of India, although

[1] It is stated that some at least of the great Vedic sacrifices have been performed in Malabar within the lifetime of men now living; see K. Ramavarma Raja, in *JRAS*, 1910, p. 625 ff. Offerings of living animals, especially goats, are of course common in parts of India, although decreasing in number every year. They are all however in connection with sectarian temples or aboriginal worship, not with the true Brāhmanical rites.

[2] The word, often spelled phonetically *suttee*, is a feminine adjective, meaning good or virtuous, and is applied to the woman who allows herself or is constrained to be burnt with her dead husband. *Sahamaraṇa* signifies 'accompanying in death,' and denotes the act. Another Hindu term is *anumaraṇa*, 'following in death,' which is used when for any reason the corpse of the husband is not on the pyre, and the widow suffers alone. She must then by law take with her some part of his clothing. Cp. J. Jolly, *Recht u. Sitte*, Strassburg, 1896, p. 68.

the custom has for many years been forbidden by the British Government.[1]

(6) The prohibition of widow re-marriage also meets with no recognition in the ancient sacred books. There was thus not a little in the older and more primitive form of the Indian ritual and faith which, by its simplicity and freedom from idolatrous or degrading practices, seemed to lend support to the native Hindu reformer in his protest against the introduction into his country of Christianity or any other alien religion. The plea for a return to the true ancient faith as taught in his sacred books, free from later additions and disguises and stripped of all admixture of foreign creeds, is familiar to those who have to do with the most earnest and thoughtful Hindus at the present day. The claim which they make that when the husk is removed the inner kernel will be found to be sweet and good and all-sufficing for their spiritual needs, is one deserving of respectful sympathy and fair examination. It is evident however that the fruits of the system, so far as it is or claims to be a satisfying response to the religious needs of mankind,

Appeal to Primitive Form and Doctrine

[1] An instance of *satī* was reported from Gayā as late as the year 1903; see *Harvest Field*, 1904, p. 360. The only passage from the Rigveda (x. 18. 8) which is quoted as authority for the practice does not actually contain any reference to it; but the original reading *agre* was altered to *agneḥ*, to secure the desired justification; see Deussen, *Gesch. d. Philosophie*, i. 1 p. 77; K. F. Geldner, *Der Rigveda in Auswahl*, ii. p. 154. Jolly, *op. cit.*, p. 67, states that the Sūtras are equally silent on the subject. In a review of Prof. Geldner's book (*JRAS*, 1910, p. 927) Mr. Keith seems curiously to understand the expression of the Rigveda to imply that the custom was in fact ancient, but had fallen into desuetude; if so, its resuscitation is inexplicable.

must be brought into judgement, as well as its theory or intentions. And if Hinduism fails under the test invited by its most sincere and open-minded supporters, it will have failed finally and for ever. The strenuous efforts put forth on its behalf are at least a testimony to the earnestness and devotion of many of its most sincere adherents.

PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

In the history and development of orthodox Indian belief, philosophy and speculative thought have played a larger part than perhaps in any other country outside of Greece. The reasoning faculty, as distinguished from the emotional, may be said to have led the way in the regulation of practice, as well as in the formulating of creed. No real appreciation of the religious feeling or aspiration of the Hindu is possible which does not take account of his philosophy. Hence of the sub-Vedic literature of India, or that which immediately succeeds in time and is scarcely inferior in authority to the revealed Veda, the more important part is to be found in relation to the six recognised philosophical systems, all of which trace their origin more or less directly to the Upanishads. Their names, with the names of their reputed founders or authors, are given as follows :—

The Vedānta,	founded by	Vyāsa.
The Mīmāṁsā,	,,	Jaimini.
The Sāṅkhya,	,,	Kapila.
The Yoga,	,,	Patañjali.
The Nyāya,	,,	Gotama.
The Vaiśeshika,	,,	Kaṇāda.

The Vedānta is also known as the *uttara-mīmāṁsā*, or *Brahma-mīmāṁsā*, the 'higher investigation' or inquiry after Brahman,' opposed to the *pūrva-mīmāṁsā*, the 'prior investigation,' or *karma-mīmāṁsā*, which is the mīmāṁsā proper. The latter has little claim to the title of a philosophy in the usual sense, but it is a commentary upon and interpretation of the ritual of the Veda, and an explanation of the relevant texts. Accordingly the mīmāṁsā expounds the *karmakāṇḍa*, as distinguished from the *jñānakāṇḍa* of the Vedānta. Both however apply themselves to the exploration and orderly exposition of *śruti*, the sacred scripture, and are therefore 'investigation,' mīmāṁsā. Similarly the Sāṅkhya and Yoga form a pair of closely related systems. The Nyāya also and Vaiśeshika are occupied to a large extent with the same or like themes, and the latter system is often regarded as a later development of the former.

Form and Subject-Matter of the Systems

The origin and early history of the six systems are lost in obscurity, and of the authors to whom they are traditionally ascribed little or nothing is known beyond the names. Like so much besides of the ancient precept and thought of India, they have been transmitted under the form of *sūtras*, collections of brief rules or statements, frequently obscure and unintelligible without a commentary; which are indeed often mere *memoriae technicae*, designed in this case to assist the memory to retain philosophical ideas and dogmas. Of the six systems not all are of equal interest or importance for the influence they have exerted on religious thought. The *Nyāya* and the *Vaiśeshika* are systems rather of logic and literary criticism, and of natural philosophy respectively, than

of metaphysics or religion. The *Yoga* systematizes rules and processes for religious exercises and austerities, by means of which the human soul may attain to union with the divine; and thus expounds methods and principles of great antiquity in India, which have exercised a profound influence upon the Indian character and life. In form however and perhaps historically it is a development of the Sāṅkhya, giving a practical application to its principles, and reinforcing or modifying them with doctrines derived from external sources.

The teaching of the Vedānta is that which has on the whole most commended itself to Hindu thought and belief. With its various ramifications and extensions it is the most popular and generally accepted philosophy in India at the present day. Essentially it is the *advaita* doctrine of the Upanishads, adapted expounded and formulated into a system. *Vedānta* signifies 'end of the Veda'; and the Upanishads themselves were originally known by the name, as comprehending the ultimate and final teaching of *śruti*, or sacred scripture, the sum and substance of all knowledge. The system is based upon the sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa, an author or teacher of whom nothing seems to be known, but who is identified in tradition, no doubt erroneously, with Vyāsa, the reputed author or compiler of the Mahābhārata, the Veda itself, and various other works. The sūtras themselves are known as Brahma-sūtras, Vedānta-, or uttara-mīmāṁsā-sūtras. A more accurate statement of the facts would be to say that the Vedānta system represents Śaṅkara's interpretation of the sutras; it is and must remain uncertain how far his exposition represents the real intention of these brief enigmatic sayings,

Vedānta

or how much is due to his own independent speculation, which has completed or given colour and form to hints and suggestions contained in the original texts. The uncertainty and ambiguity are illustrated by the fact that the great rival *bhāshya* or commentary of Rāmānuja, explains them in an altogether different and a theistic sense, and from the same sūtras deduces a system which is the complete antithesis of that of S'aṅkara. It is probable however that the latter is more true to the original meaning of the sūtras, even though he may have introduced thoughts and doctrines which were not present to the mind of the author himself. By Indian students and thinkers S'aṅkara's authority is unquestioned, and his exposition is almost universally assumed to be alone correct.

The sūtras, together with the commentaries of S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja, have been translated by Dr. Geo. Thibaut in *SBE*, vols. xxxiv., xxxviii., and xlviii., with a very full introduction, in which he discusses the various points at issue between the two commentators. The commentary of S'aṅkara (*supra*, p. 262 f.) is the older; but the *śrī-bhāshya* of Rāmānuja claims to be founded upon the teaching and interpretation of earlier writers. Both commentaries are conceived in a polemical spirit. The system of Rāmānuja as contrasted with that of S'aṅkara is known as *viśishṭa advaita*, usually rendered 'modified' or 'differentiated advaita.'[2] The supreme Brahman is not *nirguṇam*, apart from qualities or

[1] Cp. *infra*, p. 375 ff.

[2] The phrase so rendered is perhaps hardly at once intelligible; and it is urged also that it does not express the real meaning of the commentator. See R. T. Srinivasa Iyengar in *JRAS*, 1912, p. 1073 f., who explains the term as signifying the identity, 'non-dualism' of the two *viśishṭas*, *i.e.* two states or conditions of being of Brahman. As ordinarily understood, it is directed against the stern and unyielding monism of S'aṅkara, in opposition to which Rāmānuja asserted the real separate existence of individual souls.

attributes, as S'aṅkara taught, but is *saguṇam*, 'endowed with attributes,' of which intelligence and loving kindness are among the chief. The universe also is real, and individual souls are real, and retain in perpetuity a separate existence without being merged or lost in the supreme soul or Brahman. S'aṅkara controverts this and other doctrines concerning the human soul, erroneous from his point of view, by arguing that the human soul, *jīvātman*, cannot be distinct from Brahman, for one only is, Brahman is all-comprehending, *ekam evādvitīyam*; nor a part of Brahman, for Brahman is indivisible and has no parts; nor a modification or transformation of Brahman, for Brahman is unchangeable. The jīvātman, therefore, is identical with the paramātman.[1]

Interpretation of S'aṅkara

There is therefore according to S'aṅkara but one existence, one supreme absolute soul, paramātman, Brahman. Human souls have in reality no separate existence; they are not distinct from Brahman or from one another, but each and all are essentially and always one with him. It is ignorance, *avidyā*, which conceals the great truth from the human mind; but when the veil is removed, then will men realise their oneness with Brahman, and in the knowledge will find deliverance from error and sorrow, and the consummation of all good. The universe and all sensible phenomena are māyā; they are unreal, and the sole reality is Brahman. This is of course practically the doctrine of the greater portion of the Upanishads. S'aṅkara elaborated and systematized it, on the basis of the ancient sūtras; and in particular the importance

[1] Cp. *SBE*, vol. xxxiv. Introd.; *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*, ch. iv.; P Deussen, *Das System des Vedānta*[2], Leipzig, 1906, and *Elements of Metaphysics*, London, 1894, p. 324 ff.; F. Max Müller, *Vedānta Philosophy*, London, 1894, *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, 1899, ch. iv. On Bādarāyaṇa, cp. *id. ib.*, p. 153 ff., *supra*. p. 262 f.

attached to the doctrine of māyā and its complete working out seem to be due to him.

The Vedānta teaching, in the form finally and permanently given to it by S'aṅkara, may be said to be the philosophy that is most distinctively characteristic of the people and country of India at the present day. A strict and uncompromising monism, consistently carried out to its uttermost conclusions, it has implanted pantheistic tendencies and ideas more or less consciously in the minds of the great majority of Hindus, who, whatever their precise creed or sect may be, construct their working systems of thought on a pantheistic basis. It is true, of course, that one and the same mind will often entertain rival systems without any apparent consciousness of incongruity, and will even take pleasure in an eclectic philosophy, which combines and interweaves the doctrines of many schools. The foundation however will usually be found to be the teaching of the Vedānta, as set forth and expounded in the ancient commentary of S'aṅkara.

Vedānta and Sāṅkhya

The contrast between the doctrines of the Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya is fundamental and complete. The latter is entirely outdistanced in popularity by its rival; although there is evidence to show that in former times in India it was much more widely prevalent. As a system of philosophy the Sāṅkhya is materialistic and atheistic, or rather non-theistic, recognising no spiritual agency or principle in the evolution and rule of the universe, and throughout is dualistic. At every point accordingly it is opposed to Vedāntic postulates and modes of thought, and seems to have lost ground in obedience to the universal tendency and requirement of the human mind, whereby an ultimate unity is sought behind

and above the apparent multiplicity of mental and material phenomena.

The name *Sāṅkhya*[1] is usually explained as derived from a root *saṅkhyā*, meaning to count up, to enumerate, because it enumerates twenty-five *tattvas* or principles[2]; of which *purusha*, the person or soul, is the twenty-fifth, and is wholly distinct in nature from the rest. The aim which the philosophy then contemplates is to show the way by which the soul may be set free from its connection with matter and material things. Of the remaining twenty-four tattvas the first eight are *prakṛitis* or producers, and sixteen are productions. The former create or evolve, the latter are evolved. Of the eight producers again the first is the supreme *Prakṛiti*, the original blind unintelligent principle from which all existing things have come forth. *Prakṛiti* however is by itself inert and powerless. Only by union with the soul, *purusha*, does it obtain

The Title: Sāṅkhya Prakṛiti and Purusha

[1] On the significance of the term see R. Garbe, *Sāṅkhya und Yoga*, Strassburg, 1896, p. 10, where the suggestion is made that perhaps the name was originally given in derision, because of the fondness of the Sāṅkhyan philosophers for lists and numbers. F. Max Müller, *SBE*, xv. p. xxxv., *Six Systems* p. 298, thinks that the name may indicate simply enumeration of topics, as the title of a book; cp Th. Goldstücker, *Pāṇini*, 1861, p. 151.

[2] These are *avyaktam*, the 'unperceived,' the primitive element or material source of all; *buddhi*, intelligence; *ahaṅkāra*, individuality; the five *tanmātras*, or subtle elements, viz. sound, touch, form, taste, and smell; the five *mahābhūtas*, or gross elements, products of the tanmātras, viz. ether, air, fire, water, and earth; the eleven organs including *manas* or mind; and *purusha*. They are enumerated *e.g.* in Gaudapāda's Bhāshya on the Sāṅkhya Kārikā, p. 3 of Colebrooke's edition. Cp. *infra*, p. 324 ff.

the power to create. The system therefore is essentially materialistic and dualistic, ascribing the formation of the world to two distinct principles, both existing from eternity, that of matter *prakṛiti*, and that of soul *purusha*; and has no place in its philosophy for a God. Whether this dualistic character is really primitive, or merely a later development or accretion, is perhaps open to question.

Age and Sources of the Sāṅkhya

That Sāṅkhyan doctrines are of very considerable antiquity in India is proved by the fact that Buddhism has borrowed largely from this source. They therefore circulated and were taught, practically in the form in which they now exist, as early as the sixth century B.C.; and the germs of the fully-developed thought must lie considerably further back. Of its origin however and early history nothing is known. Among the chief Upanishads the leading exponent and representative of the doctrine is the S'vetāśvatara. This treatise however, more perhaps than any other, presents a combination of thoughts and teaching derived from various sources; and this feature, which is characteristic of all the Upanishads except the very shortest, witnesses to a remarkable variety of opinion, and to a period of rivalry and contention which was probably prolonged during many centuries. It has issued in the practical supersession of the Sāṅkhya teaching as a living and active force in India, and the latter is indeed very little understood or known at the present time.

It is in the S'vetāśvatara also that the earliest use of the name Sāṅkhya in a technical sense seems to occur. The extant literature moreover in which the doctrines of the system are formally expounded and taught is all comparatively late. But the influence of teaching closely akin to that of the Sāṅkhya, if not in name identical with it, may be traced widely in Indian literature from an early period. The recognised treatises in which the principles of the system are set forth are two in number,—(1) The Sāṅkhya Kārikā, a comparatively brief work, which native tradition and belief ascribe to the first century before Christ. By European scholars however it is brought down to a much later date, in or about the fifth century of our era. About two centuries later a Chinese

translation was made, which in its turn became the basis of the account which in the early part of the eleventh century the Arabic writer Albiruni gave of the Sāṅkhya philosophy.[1]

For a yet later work, the *Sāṅkhya sūtras*, native scholars claim the authority of Kapila himself, the traditional founder of the Sāṅkhya system. Whether the name is authentic, or whether the Kapila of the Buddhist books, a contemporary and opponent of Gautama himself, has anything to do with originating or systematizing the creed of the Sāṅkhya, is uncertain. The word itself is simply an adjective signifying 'brown' or 'reddish-brown'; and was perhaps in origin like 'the Buddha,' merely a title or descriptive epithet. The date of the sūtras is supposed to be about the end of the fourteenth century, and they are not independent of the earlier Sāṅkhya Kārikā. In the judgement of Prof. Garbe they exhibit a mediating tendency, and endeavour to reconcile the apparent contradictions of the two systems of the Vedānta and the Sāṅkhya. Their late origin is further shown by the fact that the author of the *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*, who about the middle of the fourteenth century bases his account of the various philosophies on the recognised sūtras of each school, is apparently unacquainted with this work.

A third brief treatise, which is not recognised as an authoritative source or exposition of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, but which is believed to have been compiled at an earlier date than even the Sāṅkhya Kārikā, is the *tattva-samāsa*, 'compendium' or 'summary of truth.' The title may be intended to carry with it a reference to 'tattva,' essential reality, as a technical term of the system. The work itself however is hardly an exposition of a philosophy, even in the briefest possible form, but a mere statement of themes and principles.[2]

Doctrine of the Sāṅkhya

The philosophy of the Sāṅkhya begins, after the manner of all Indian speculation, with the problem of existence. There is a real existing world of phenomena, distinct from, but yet a part of which are the separate individual souls, which have their life therein. Soul and matter are each of them real, and are independent

[1] Garbe, *op. cit.*, p. 7; Max Müller, *Six Systems*, p. 290 ff.

[2] Cp. Garbe, *l.c.*; Max Müller, *op. cit.*, pp. 294 ff., 318 ff.

of one another, as experience proves. The famous analogy or illustration of the Vedāntist who suggests that phenomena are deceptive as a rope on a dark night is mistaken for a snake is dismissed by pointing out that closer inspection reveals the rope as a rope and nothing else, but no such disillusionment ever takes place in the case of matter. The problem then is to account for the origin of these two that are found to be in existence, material phenomena and immaterial souls.

The author of the *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha* in his discussion of the Sāṅkhyan system, arguing polemically from the point of view of the Sāṅkhya itself, asserts that there are four conceivable ways in which existing things may have come into being :—

(1) The existent may have been produced from the non-existent. This is the error of the Buddhists. For clearly that which does not exist cannot be the cause of anything, as of the existent.

(2) That which is as yet non-existent may be produced from the existent. This also, the view of the adherents of the Nyāya philosophy, is impossible. For the supposed consequence or effect, being *ex hypothesi* non-existent, has no connection with the assumed cause ; hence there is no relation, no *nexus*, between cause and effect, and the whole is reduced to a matter of haphazard or accident, any cause might produce any effect, since there is no bond that unites them together. Experience however teaches that this is not the case, since effect invariably follows cause in the strictest and closest connection.

(3) All effects are illusory and have no actual existence, or in other words there are no real effects. This is the opinion of the Vedāntists ; but this again is contrary to experience, which assures us that the phenomenal world disclosed to us by our senses is real.

(4) The existent comes from, and is produced by the existent. This view alone, which is maintained and taught in the Sāṅkhya, is correct, and is in harmony both with reason and experience.[1]

[1] *Sarvad.*, translated by Cowell and Gough, London, 1894, p. 224 ff.

Thus the Sāṅkhya philosophers adopted and carried to its extreme and logical conclusion the principle *ex nihilo nihil fit*,—there can be no effect without an adequate and sufficient cause, and in the effect there can be nothing which was not present implicitly in the cause or causes, otherwise there would arise the fallacy of the non-existent derived from the existent. Cause and effect are absolutely and always equal to one another, and on this principle the universe as it exists at any given moment has come to be what it is. And given the Sāṅkhyan premiss of the reality of the physical universe, it is difficult to see at what other conclusion they could have arrived. The weakness and unsatisfactory character of the philosophical system as professing to be explanatory of the material or spiritual world clearly lay in this, that it had no definite account to give of the *origin* of the causal series; postulating on its own principles a *regressus in aeternum*, cause antecedent to effect in endless succession, it was unable logically to arrive at any initial cause. The Vedānta claimed to have established a prime mover, and to afford at least an intelligible account of the origin of things. Its rival sought to determine and explain the constitution of the universe on rational grounds, and found itself with a double series stretching backward, each step in which was explicable by the preceding, but to which no real or intelligible commencement or primary impulse could be assigned.

On the material or physical side the process of evolution was traced back to a primitive or ground substance, *prakṛiti*, the material source or ultimate cause of the visible universe. The existence of prakriti itself is in no way explained, but is simply affirmed, as though it were a necessary

presupposition of material conditions and postulates. Of itself however prakṛiti possesses no power of initiative, no inherent capacity to evolve forms or bodies. Motionless and inert, it is only when quickened into action by the presence of *purusha*, soul or spirit, that it gains creative power, and reproduces itself in the infinitely varied forms of the material universe. Thus also in its turn the purusha, which of its own nature is spiritual and immaterial, becomes by its contact with prakṛiti imprisoned in matter, fettered, confused, and as it were contaminated, and is blind to its own true separateness and right of liberty. Deliverance is attained by the recognition on the part of purusha of its real and essential distinctness in nature from the material universe with which it is involved. When the individual soul or purusha discerns this truth, by virtue of its enlightenment it will free itself from the bonds of its unnatural union with prakṛiti, the chain of *karma* will be broken, freedom and perfect blessedness will be consummated. Thus for the Sāṅkhya equally with the Vedānta *moksha* is gained by way of knowledge.

The Three Guṇas

The same phenomenon or process, *i.e.* the awakening of prakṛiti into activity from out of a dull inert and featureless condition, is otherwise described as a disturbance of the equilibrium of the three *guṇas* of which the prakṛiti is composed. In the later sūtra and classical Sanskrit the word *guṇa* denotes quality, attribute, and is ordinarily so rendered. As a technical term however of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, it expresses rather constituent, or factor; and the equipoise of the *guṇas* in the primeval substance or prakṛiti is familiarly illustrated by the figure of a rope consisting of three strands. The three

guṇas are present, but in varying proportions, in all existing and material things; only in the original prakṛiti are they to be found in exact mutual equivalence. The different qualities or characteristics which all existing things possess is to be explained by the preponderance of one or other of the three guṇas.

The three guṇas are *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, or goodness, emotion or passion, sometimes said to be equivalent to activity, and darkness. The literal meaning of the words, however, conveys no adequate idea of their philosophical significance. As technical terms they hardly admit of translation. The equilibrium of the three, which is the condition of prakṛiti, constitutes the perfect state. If the guṇa *sattva* is in excess, satisfaction or pleasure is the result; a preponderance of *rajas* gives rise to pain, of *tamas* to indifference or apathy.[1] The association of these with the states or conditions which they produce is readily explicable from the Indian outlook on life and the universal presuppositions of Hindu thought. Thus underlying the second is the familiar Indian conception that all existence, movement, etc., involve suffering. Hence *rajas*, energy or activity, necessarily gives rise to distress or pain; while *tamas*, darkness, induces quiescence or repose, a negative cessation from action which yet is not positive bliss. In the world of the gods it is said that the guṇa *sattva* is predominant, *rajas* in that of men, *tamas* in that of the lower animals, plants, etc. A portion of each of the guṇas however is present everywhere and in everything.

[1] Cp. Garbe, *op. cit.*, p. 19 f.; Max Müller, *Six Systems* (1899), pp. 146 f., 343 ff., 468; Deussen, p. 250 ff. The last-named renders the three terms respectively *Freude* φιλία, *Schmerz* νεῖκος, and *Gleichgultigkeit*, *Apathie*.

Evolution

The process of evolution once begun proceeds in definite order, and in harmony with the law of karma, which rules all nature, organic and inorganic. The sole difference between these two provinces of the natural universe is the presence in the former of *purushas*, individual souls. But karma, the dominant and absolute control of cause and effect, determines all. The first fruits of the activity of prakṛiti is *buddhi*, knowledge or intelligence. Buddhi is the faculty of judging, discerning, by which dull senseless prakṛiti becomes 'illuminated and intellectualised,'[1] and so capable of proceeding further along the path of development. How buddhi could exist, or be conceived as existing separately and independently, is not explained; nor is any solution offered of the similar difficulty which arises with reference to later products of the prakṛiti. There are however said to be eight modes of manifestation of buddhi, of which *dharma* virtue and *jñāna* knowledge are the more important; with the exception of jñāna these are all lost or disappear when the soul escapes from its bondage to matter. Buddhi is also known as *mahat*, the Great, from the all-important position which it occupies in the evolutionary process. This striking technical use of the term is peculiar to the Sāṅkhya philosophy and to systems derived therefrom; and is not improbably one of the numerous points of contact between it and Buddhism.

From buddhi is developed or evolved *ahaṅkāra*, egoism or self-consciousness, the conception of the Self, the Ego, as distinguished from that which is not Self. The first act or office, therefore, of the

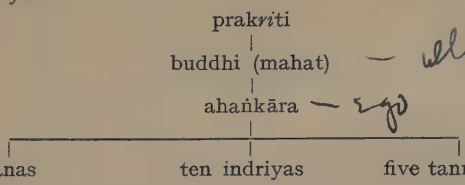
[1] Max Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 322 ff.

buddhi is to distinguish between the individual 'I' (*aham*, ego) and that which is 'not I,' between subject and object, between the thinking conscious mind, and the material which it has in its thought and about which it thinks. *Ahaṅkāra* then in its turn proceeds to manifest itself in three ways. Under the predominant influence of the guṇa *sattva* it originates *manas*, mind or will, the inner or central organ; of *rajas*, the ten *indriyas*, outer or external organs; of *tamas*, the five *tanmātras* or subtle elements.[1]

Subtle and Gross Bodies

The eleven organs including manas, and the five tanmātras together with ahaṅkāra and buddhi, constitute the 'subtle body,' *sūkshma-śarīra* or *liṅga-śarīra*, which is distinct from the gross material body, but invisible surrounds and envelops the purusha (soul), and accompanies it in all its migrations. This conception of an unseen ethereal

[1] Garbe, *op. cit.*, p. 22 f.; Max Müller, *Six Systems*, p. 326 ff. Deussen, p. 241 ff. The process may be represented diagrammatically:—



The external organs are further subdivided into the five *buddhīndriyas*, organs of knowledge or perception, viz. sight, hearing, feeling or touch (i.e. skin-perception), taste (tongue) and smell; and five *karmendriyas*, organs of action (karma), viz. hands, feet, mouth (as the medium of speech), together with the organs of generation and excretion. The tanmātras are the subtle essences or principles of form, sound, touch, taste and smell, out of which the grosser elements are produced, *i.e.* the *bhūtas* or *mahābhūtas*.

body correlative to the gross body of the senses is common to many, probably most peoples, ancient and modern, and re-appears in the ghosts of folk-tales; but it is interesting to find it adopted into an Indian philosophical system, and made part of a definite cosmical and evolutionary theory. Moreover all souls, though distinct individually, are alike in their nature and qualities; and it is in the *liṅga-śarīra*, therefore, that there inhere those attributes or characteristics which make one man to differ from another, and together form his personality. The subtle body is responsible for actions, virtuous or vicious, etc., experiences joy and sorrow, remorse and fear, and is moved to anger, hatred, or desire; it is, in brief, the subject of karma, and the medium through which karma works. The earthly life of the individual, therefore, is constituted by the union of this *sūkshma-śarīra* with the gross material body, the *sthūla-śarīra*, which is composed of the five gross elements, the *mahābhūtas*. Death is the dissolution of this union, followed by the decay of the *sthūla-śarīra*, while the soul and its subtle envelop go forth together and under the compelling influence of karma enter into combination with a new body. The cycle of re-births (*saṁsāra*) comes to a close, and the thread is broken only when the purusha learns to recognise its own essential distinctness from the matter that surrounds and envelops it. Then it is set free from bondage, escapes from its entanglement, and is no longer constrained to a new embodiment in a corporeal frame. Thus karma is as it were the regulative principle of the entire evolution, and from karma is derived the impulse whereby a new union is effected and the cycle of existence perpetuated.

The purusha therefore is entirely distinct from the other twenty-four *tattvas*, and stands apart and aloof from the process of evolution. Technically it is said to be neither evolver nor evolute; while the original prakṛiti is solely concerned in producing or evolving, the eleven organs are products alone, buddhi and ahaṅkāra and the five tanmātras, the last by virtue of their part in the production of the gross elements, both evolve and are evolved. The soul is defined to be pure being, without parts or attributes, eternal and indestructible; it is immaterial and independent of the power of karma, which cannot affect it for good or for ill. Moreover the number of independent souls or purushas in the universe is infinite, and obviously does not admit of either increase or diminution.

The Sāṅkhya system, therefore, may be said to be rather deistic than either atheistic or materialistic. It does not postulate a Supreme Power, but neither does it in set terms deny the existence of a God. It simply as it were ignores the question, and constructs its theory of the universe independently, as though to show that the hypothesis of a Personal Creator or superintendent of Creation is unnecessary in order to explain the constitution of the universe. The system however, so far from being materialistic, distinctly subordinates matter to spirit in the person of the purusha. Prakṛiti is neither able nor apparently desirous to create until stimulated by the presence of purusha; and the latter is not active in any sense in the work of evolution, but merely 'shows himself,' and the process automatically as it were begins. Moreover the entire scheme of the evolution has in view the advantage, the

Deism of the Sāṅkhya

disillusionment of the purusha, and is directed to secure its emancipation from confinement within the prison-house of matter. Prakṛiti accordingly, although co-eternal, is not co-equal with purusha, but exists for the sake of the latter. Only in a limited sense therefore can the system be described as dualistic.

Contrast with the Vedānta

The points of contrast therefore with the Vedānta are mainly two: (1) The latter declares that all souls are one, and are identical with the supreme Soul, Brahman or Paramātman. To the Sāṅkhyan philosopher all souls are different, not indeed in nature, but as separate independent entities, each having a distinct and individual existence without beginning and without end. And (2) the Sāṅkhya regards the universe as real and eternal; the Vedāntist pronounces it to be māyā, illusion, Brahman being the sole reality. Both systems however have as their final aim the deliverance of the soul, and both achieve that deliverance by way of knowledge. The Vedānta bids a man know himself, his human ātman, to be one and the same with the supreme ātman, with Brahman. The Sāṅkhya teaches him that his soul, the purusha within the material body, is absolutely and essentially distinct from matter, its envelop. Let him know this, and he is free.

The Yoga System

The leading doctrines of the Sāṅkhya are reproduced in the Yoga system founded by Patañjali. The text book of the sect is the Yogasūtras, an undoubtedly ancient work, the authorship of which is ascribed to the founder himself, and which seems to have a better claim to authenticity than many similar compositions. Patañjali lived

in the second century before Christ. In its main features and practices however the system is certainly of much greater antiquity, and like the Sāṅkhya itself antedates the rise of Buddhism. *Yoga* signifies 'yoking,' 'union'; in this instance union with the Supreme, a loss of consciousness of self in the consciousness of being one with the Divine, with the supreme ātman. And the *yoga* is distinguished from the *sannyāsa*, the *yogin* mendicant from the *sannyāsin*, who seeks the same goal or final end of union with God, in that the latter endeavours to achieve his aim by means of the abandonment of all earthly possessions and attachments (*sannyas* = to cast off, resign), but the yogin through ascetic practices and meditation. The terms are often used interchangeably and without distinction.

The Yoga system is dualistic in the same sense as the Sāṅkhya, and like the latter teaches that *mokṣha*, deliverance or emancipation, is attained by the knowledge on the part of the purusha of its essential distinctness in nature from the matter in which it is involved. Upon this teaching however it has grafted theistic doctrines, introduced from without, and never completely harmonized or accommodated to the original atheistic or non-theistic views which they overshadow. In particular the Yoga theory asserts that the knowledge which brings deliverance is most readily and surely to be obtained by the union of the soul with the Supreme God, absorption into his being, who is recognised as personal as well as omnipresent and all-powerful. Thus the Yoga has developed into a theism in the fullest sense; while at the same time the theistic doctrines remain as it were extraneous to its philosophic theory, which is the same as that of the Sankhya. A theism and

belief in a personal God are essential to the Yoga observance and cult; but they are not essential to the Yoga theory of the constitution of the universe or of its history, and never really blended with it into a harmonious whole. In the Yogasūtras the chief office or function of the God is to guide and assist the souls in their progress towards emancipation. With works of the nature of creation or providence, of rewarding the good or punishing the evil, he has nothing to do; nor indeed on the premisses of the system is it possible that such functions should be ascribed to him.

Asceticism

Ascetic practices of all kinds are of great antiquity in India, and through them it has always been believed that miraculous powers might be attained. The original name for such exercises was *tapas*, 'warmth' or 'heat'; and there was no limit to the control which by means of *tapas* might be obtained, not only over the ascetic's own bodily frame, rendering it independent of distance, gravitation, etc., but over the entire universe not excluding the gods themselves. Originally, as probably the name indicates, *tapas* took the form of self-mortification, fasting, and other like practices. Later in the Yoga greater stress was laid upon meditation, concentration of thought; and minute rules were given for the postures (*āsana*), regulation of the breath (*prāṇayāma*), etc., which were understood to be most conducive to securing the desired end of union with the divine. These gave rise to trances, cataleptic fits, and similar experiences, and in the so-called yoga sleep (*yoganidrā*) self-hypnotism played a large part.[1]

[1] See for the Yoga doctrine and system esp. R. Garbe, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–51; Deussen, p. 382 ff., and *Allg. Gesch. der Philosophie*,

The doctrine of the Yoga has from the very beginning been associated with the theory of the four *āśramas*,[1] the periods of life or the vocations which the orthodox Brāhman was supposed to take up in succession. The origin or motive of the association it is not easy to determine. It is possible that the latter theory grew up or was invented to order to give official sanction, as it were, to ascetic practices that were already common, to make provision for them in the orthodox programme of life, and at the same time to ensure that as a rule the undertaking of them should be deferred to an age at which they would not interfere with the rearing of a family and the due preservation and continuance of the race. The doctrine of the āśramas is at least as early as the period of the more ancient Upanishads,[2] and was intended to cover the entire lifetime of a Brāhman from boyhood to death. The name however is not found in the Rigveda.

The Four Āśramas

The word *āśrama* itself is derived from the root *śram*, to toil or exert oneself, especially in acts of penance or self-mortification; and denoted in the first instance apparently a place appropriated to such acts, a retreat or hermitage, and then the time or period of life thus employed. Accordingly the *āśramavāsin* was a hermit or ascetic; and *āśramadharma*, the laws or regulations to be observed during a period of ascetic devotion.

i. 3 pp. 507–578; Max Müller, *Six Systems*, ch. vii.; A. A. Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, p. 196 f. And for the ascetic rules and practices, art. *Asceticism* (*Hindu*) in *ERE*, vol. ii., and the literature there cited.

[1] *supra*, p. 255.

[2] See Deussen, p. 369 ff., with full references and quotations

The four periods of life were: (1) *brahmaćārin*, student of the Veda or sacred scripture and doctrine, during which personal service was rendered to the teacher in whose house the student resided, and under whose directions he pursued his studies. The period of studentship lasted for twelve years, but might be prolonged, and in exceptional cases apparently was continued for the whole lifetime. The condition of residence under the guidance of one and the same teacher was not always exacted, and a student might place himself under the control of different instructors in succession. In no case however did he live at home. At the close of the period of studentship he was dismissed by the teacher with exhortations and advice. (2) *Gṛihastha*, or householder. It is a religious and social obligation incumbent on every Hindu to beget a son to carry on his family line. In the second period therefore, the Brāhman entered upon a married life, discharged his duties as a householder to the community and to the state, and made provision for his family. The special religious duties of the gṛihastha were study of the Veda, sacrifice, and almsgiving. (3) *Vānaprastha*, recluse or hermit (*vana*, a wood or forest). The gṛihastha who had fulfilled his social and general obligations retired to the forest, and there in meditation and the practice of asceticism sought to enter into communion with the unseen, and to gain the knowledge that would bring him emancipation and peace. According to some authorities it was for the benefit and guidance of the vānaprastha that the treatises known as āraṇyakas[1] were composed. This was the period more especially intended for the cultivation of yoga practices and observances. (4) The last stage, that of the *Sannyāsin*, was not very clearly distinguished from the vānaprastha, and seems to have been a later addition to an original or earlier theory of three āśramas.[2] The Brāhman in old age 'casts off' everything, home and friends and all personal possessions, and as a wanderer (*parivrājaka*) and a beggar (*bhikshu*) moves from place to place, dependent solely upon alms for his daily support. He is free from care and is indifferent to everything, even life and death. In this habit and state of life was to be found the most practical and efficacious means of attaining to a knowledge of the ātman, and consequent salvation and final

[1] *supra*, *p.* 254 f.

[2] *supra*, p. 287.

bliss. A special though late Upanishad, the Sannyāsa Up, was devoted to its description.[1]

Epic Poems

The epic poems most widely known and popular in India, which are most closely interwoven with the life and thought of the people, somewhat in the same manner as the songs of Homer entered into the national life of Greece, or the poetry and imagery of Milton have influenced English religious ideas, are the two to which reference has already been made, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.[2] These form the great storehouse of mythology and popular belief, on which the later *Purāṇas*

[1] The duties which are required of the 'twice-born' man during each of the four periods are described with much detail in *Manu*, bks. ii. to vi., *SBE*, vol. xxv. Of the final period, for example it is said,—'Let him always wander alone, without companion, in order to attain (final liberation) . . . he shall neither possess a fire nor a dwelling, he may go to a village for his food, indifferent to everything, firm of purpose, meditating and concentrating his mind on Brahman . . . let him not desire to die, let him not desire to live; let him wait for his time, as a servant for the payment of his wages' (*Manu*, vi. 41–45). Cp. arts. *Āśrama, Asceticism* in *ERE*, vol. ii., with full references; J. Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, Strassburg, 1896, p. 148 ff.; Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Philosophie*, i. 3, p. 84 ff.; Monier-Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*[4], pp. 55, 362 f. The four stages are of course little if at all observed in India at the present day, although homeless ascetics roam over the entire peninsula in great numbers, living upon the alms freely bestowed upon them. A description of four corresponding stages in the life of a sannyāsin is given from the autobiography of Dayānanda Sarasvatī in *SBE*, xv. p. 266 f., note 6. On analogies in Buddhist literature and doctrine see Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, 1899, p. 211 ff.

[2] *supra*, p. 304.

and other legendary accounts of gods and heroes have drawn ; and the vast mass of later mythological literature gathers round these as its source and kernel. They have been therefore and are to-day the ultimate literary sources of the usages and beliefs of the majority of the Hindus, much as Homer appears to have been a kind of Bible to the Greeks. The later mythological writings in most instances are indebted to them for inspiration and suggestion, although by their grotesqueness and extravagance of detail they contrast unfavourably with the more ancient poems.[1] Both the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa are extant in slightly varying recensions, the precise interrelations of which have not been determined, and which present

[1] For a full account of this, probably the earliest epic poetry in existence, it must be sufficient to refer to works dealing especially with Hindu literature and history. A brief and readable description and outline of both poems will be found in the first two chapters of J. Talboys Wheeler's *Short History of India* Cp. R. W. Frazer, *Lit. Hist. of India*, London, 1898, ch. x. ; Macdonell, ch. x. ; Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, chh xii.–xiv. The Rāmāyaṇa is usually understood as celebrating in heroic and legendary form the conquest of Southern India by the Āryans. Frazer and others however express doubts on this point, or at least regard it as not proven, on the ground mainly that in the Mahābhārata there are more traces of an acquaintance with the south than in the very vague Rāmāyaṇa ; *op. cit.*, p. 305 f. Verse renderings of parts of both epics by Romesh Dutt have been published in the *Temple Classics*, London, 1898 and 1899 ; and literal prose translations of the Mahābh. have been printed in Calcutta. The Sanskrit text also has been edited at Calcutta and at Bombay. Neither of these however satisfies the need for a really critical edition, the preparation of which would be a work of much difficulty and time. A South Indian recension is also known which seems to differ considerably from that of the north. An edition of this has been published at Madras in Telugu characters in four volumes. Cp. G. Bühler, *Indian*

many problems of great difficulty to the historian and student of comparative mythology. The latter epic, which is the more finished production, sets forth the virtues of noble woman in the person of Sītā, wife of Rāma, faithful under all manner of temptation and suffering, and in the end triumphantly vindicated and restored to happiness. The Mahābhārata in lengthy and discursive fashion, with many breaks and diversions, relates the story of the war between the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas, two families of cousins living in the north-west of India or the Panjāb; in whose rivalries and contests the gods interpose with advice or active assistance, in a similar way to the Homeric deities in the war around Troy. And the aim of the whole is to describe how the devout god-fearing Pāṇḍavas triumph at last over their impious foes, and are received above into the habitations of the gods.[1]

Of neither poem is it possible to determine with any certainty the exact date. Internal evidence seems to show that the Rāmāyaṇa, at least in its present form, is later than the Mahābhārata. The numerous digressions of the latter work,

Studies, No. 2, Vienna, 1892; E. W. Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 349 ff.; *al.* Of the different recensions in which the Rāmāyaṇa exists that of Bombay represents the oldest form of the text. English renderings have been published in Calcutta and Benares. On the Rāmāyaṇa of Tulsi Dās cp. also a note by Dr. Hoernle in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 499.

[1] How far the present form of the poem represents precisely its original purpose is uncertain; cp. notes on the war which is its subject by Grierson and Keith, *JRAS*, 1908, p. 831 ff. 'That the main theme of the original Mahābhārata was not a war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, but between the former and the Pañćālas, whose allies were the Pāṇḍavas, is, I think, almost universally admitted' (p. 838 f.). In the same journal, p. 309 ff., there is an interesting article by F. E. Pargiter, with map, on the nations of India at the time of the great war discussing their habitat and relations.

the long and disconnected episodes which interrupt the progress of the narrative, forbid our assigning it, as it stands, to any single age. In all probability the composition or compilation of the poem extended over a considerable period of time, perhaps many centuries; and some of its elements or parts go back to a great antiquity.[1]

Doctrine of the Epics

In the nature of the case, therefore, the epic poems cannot be regarded as teaching any distinctive form of doctrine to the exclusion of others. They contain the utmost variety of thought, on God and the universe, and on all the problems and relationships of life. Earlier and later views find a place in them side by side, often without attempt at reconciliation. There is on the whole a closer approximation to Sāṅkhya teaching than to Vedānta, but more or less clear pre-intimations and germs of all the later philosophical systems are to be found in them. The most widely known and esteemed treatise of religious teaching and philosophy, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*,[2] is a section or episode of the Mahābhārata (vi. 25–42); and the *Anugītā*, which to a large extent reflects the doctrines of the Gītā itself, is part of the same great work (xiv. 16–51).[3] Besides these the two most

[1] The comparative antiquity of the two epics in their original form can hardly be other than uncertain, and the point is not of much importance. Prof. Macdonell however inclines to the view that the kernel of the Rāmāyaṇa, which he places *c.* 500 B.C., is older than any part of the existing Mahābhārata. The more recent additions to the former poem he regards as *circa* two to three centuries later (*op. cit.*, p. 309). Cp. Jolly, *Recht u. Sitte* p. 68, who points out that the antiquity of the Rāmāyaṇa is shown by the fact that none of the widows in the epic practise *satī*, though allusions to the practice are found.

[2] *infra*, p. 366 ff.

[3] Translated, together with the Bhag. G., in *SBE*, vol. viii.

important passages of the Mahābhārata for religious and philosophical teaching are the *Sanatsujātīya* (v. 40–45),[1] and the *Mokshadharma* (xii. 174–367).[2] In some passages there is a very close relation to the Law-Book of Manu,[3] texts and verses reappearing in the two works, in each instance derived probably from an older and common source. Views regarded as erroneous are combated, although for the most part without naming any particular representative or system, as Buddhism and the karmakāṇḍa of the later Vedic writings; and the technical language of the schools is employed. Elsewhere there appears to be an attempt to mediate between the Vedānta and Sāṅkhya schools of thought. And the most varied and even contradictory principles and doctrines find a place in poems which are unrivalled for their many-sided character and divergent interest.

Theistic Teaching

Not the least striking and prominent feature of the epic poems is their theistic and even monotheistic teaching. In the Rāmāyaṇa the chief place is naturally occupied by Rāma,[4] who through the popularity and widely-spread influence of the epic has become one of the greatest and most honoured deities of modern India. The Mahābhārata recognises the later Indian triad of Brahmā, Vishṇu, and Śiva, and in some passages assigns the first

[1] *SBE*, viii. pp. 135–194.

[2] Cp. Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Philos.*, i. 3 p. 8 ff., where a brief summary also of the contents of the nineteen books of the Mahābhārata is given. The same author has published a German translation of the four passages above named, *Vier Philosophische Texte des Mahābhāratam*, Liepzig, 1906.

[3] *infra*, p. 339 f.

[4] *infra*, p. 360 f.

place to Brahmā, who is then in effect a personification of the primeval Brahma, the first and original principle of all things. Generally however Vishṇu[1] is supreme, especially in the character of Kṛishṇa,[2] and his worship and obedience to his commands are inculcated with much earnestness. In other passages however even Vishnu is subordinated to S'iva, the ancient Rudra of the Rigveda, who is exalted to the highest place of authority and power. It is probable that the parts of the poem which thus celebrate the praises and dignity of S'iva are amongst the latest in origin. Finally in the philosophical spirit all three gods are declared to be but one and the same, the one Supreme manifesting himself under different forms and names.

Law-Books

A contemporary element of great importance in the moulding of Indian religious beliefs is the legal and formal. The Hindu mind, over and above its essentially religious character, is also subtle and litigious, delighting in forms and rules, in generalisations and distinctions. From a very early age therefore there have been in existence in India elaborate codes of law, of marvellous intricacy and minuteness, providing rules of procedure for every conceivable occasion in public or private life, national individual and domestic. Law moreover and religion have always been more intimately and closely connected together in the life and thought of the Hindu than perhaps among any

[1] *infra*, p. 351 ff.
[2] *infra*, p. 362 f.
[3] *infra*, p. 391 ff.

other people. The best-known and most widely esteemed of these Law-Books is that of Manu.[1] Most of the *Sūtras* also, or rules bearing on public and private life, which pass under the names of other law-givers, have been published in English translations, and are therefore readily accessible.[2] Neither the date nor the age of Manu's work has been certainly determined. Professor Bühler would assign the authorship to the second or third century of our era.[3] The date named does not imply of course that the book may not embody older material, or have suffered in the lapse of time many additions and interpolations.

The laws of Manu begin, like the Hebrew Pentateuch, with the creation of the universe. They treat of civil and criminal law, of student and domestic life, of rites and sacrifices, of caste, penance, asceticism, transmigration, and incidentally of many other matters. In orthodox view and practice moreover the authority of Manu is supreme. In the private religious life of the Hindu

[1] Translated by the late G. Bühler in the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxv., with an elaborate and scholarly introduction and notes.

[2] In volumes of the above series: Vol. ii.[2], *Sacred Laws of the Āryas*, pt. 1, Āpastamba and Gautama, 1897; vol. vii., *Institutes of Vishnu*, 1880; vol. xiv., *Sacred Laws of the Āryas*, pt. 2, Vasishṭha and Baudhāyana; vol. xxxiii., *Minor Law-Books*, Nārada, Bṛihaspati.

[3] *SBE*, vol. xxv. p. cvi. ff.; cp. Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 246, 261 f., who dates the code not much later than 200 A.D.; Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Philos.*, i. 3. p. 11 f.; especially Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, p. 13 ff., with bibliography. Dr. Jolly is inclined to doubt whether the ordinary view which connects the code of Manu with the Vedic school of the Mānavas and the lost *Mānava Dharmasūtra* is correct. The Sanskrit text of Manu was published by Dr. Jolly in a critical edition, London, 1887; and has been edited also in India.

there is no room left for initiative or choice. Everything down to the minutest detail is regulated by rule and custom, conformity to which is enforced on pain of loss of social position. In works of this nature therefore and in the practice founded upon them, it is almost inevitable that the outward form and manner should be that to which the greatest importance is attached; with the inward motive or spirit they concern themselves little. The influence of Manu and of the other law-books has undoubtedly been strong in the direction of maintaining intact the fabric of ancient observance and ritual; but they have done little or nothing towards retaining the ancient faith, without which the elaborate forms are empty of vitality and worth.

POPULAR AND SECTARIAN RELIGIONS

History and Development

How far the beliefs and observances of ancient Brāhmanism, of which a faithful picture has been preserved in the sacred books, ever became matters of actual practice beyond a very narrow circle, or filtered through to the common people, must remain uncertain. The influence which these have exercised on later cults, and on the developments of modern Hinduism, has been too varied and profound to allow of their being regarded as merely the possession of a few exclusive Brāhmans. On both sides, the literary and priestly as well as the popular and superstitious, the barriers were at least occasionally broken down. A proud philosophy and ritual so far unbent as for the sake of peace and its own predominance to adopt

deities and countenance practices to which the lower orders tenaciously clung. The mass of the people, ignorant and without leisure for studying philosophical abstractions, allowed their own rude thought to be dominated by the higher conceptions of an intellectual aristocracy, and to be interpreted in accordance with their ideas. It would be of exceeding interest to be able to trace historically and consecutively this process of intermixture, of joint growth and decay, whereby a formal book-religion, living by rule and ordinance, adapted itself to the freedom and unconventionality of popular beliefs, and by yielding the letter and form vanquished in the spirit and in fact. This also would be the ideal and logical method by which to treat of the religious history of India,—to follow the course of faith and practice from the earliest times of which knowledge is available to the highly complex systems and forms in which these appear at the present day. In the case of the Hindu religions, however, the necessary evidence and materials for such a consecutive narrative have been until recently almost altogether wanting.

The Sectarian Religions the Possession of the People

In part the reason has been that the text-books and popular manuals of the sectarian religions, being for the most part composed in the different vernaculars of the people, have failed to attract the attention of European scholars, and their wealth of religious thought has remained unappreciated. With the result that a deep and strong religious feeling, largely dissociated in sympathy from the orthodox creed of the ancient books, has had less than justice done to it; although through it has run the current of most profound influence on the general life of the

Indian people, and this in its turn has modified or in practice altogether changed the form and character of the ancient Brāhmanic faith, as it has filtered down to the lower strata of the population. The ultimate consequence has been that the orthodox ritual and creed have in many, perhaps most instances been less of a living force among the people than the beliefs and customs and thoughts which have been handed down by oral tradition, or have been enshrined in the popular literature, the songs and folk-lore to which the hearts of the people have clung.

Difficulties and Defects of Historical Record

A second difficulty which besets the student of Indian religious thought in the attempt to frame a consecutive and consistent narrative, and to blend the very varied elements of the picture into one harmonious whole, is the comparative failure of historical and chronological *data*. It is only within very recent times that it has been possible in any real sense, by the help of archaeological research, and in dependence on the evidence of coins, inscriptions, etc., to write the involved but deeply interesting story of the early history of India.[1] Rich as the indigenous literature of India has always been in poetry and romance and imaginative detail, it fails in the more sober elements of historical or constructive record. Contemporary accounts of native authorship which

[1] The first essay towards such a history was made by Vincent A. Smith, late of the Indian Civil Service, *Early History of India from 600 B.C to the Muhammadan Conquest*, Oxford, 1904. Few were so well qualified to attempt the task as Mr. Smith. The value of the work and the appreciation with which it was received were proved by the fact that a second edition was called for within two or three years.

should fill, however imperfectly, for the peoples of India the place which is taken in our own past by the chronicles of Anglo-Saxon history would be of inestimable value. Of the few and scanty records, not always clear or reliable, that exist, the scope is entirely local and limited. And thus in the case of Indian history dependence has to be placed almost entirely upon the narratives and writings of foreigners, which are rarely sympathetic, but on the contrary were composed in the interests of foreign dominion or state-craft,—Chinese, Greek, Muhammadan and Persian, Portuguese, etc.; with what help can be gained from coins, monuments, and tombs. All these convey little or no information with respect to religious practices and the currents of religious belief.[1] After all the care and research that have been engaged there remain periods of time more or less prolonged, subjects involved in a greater or less obscurity, on which

[1] Exception should be made of the narratives of the Chinese pilgrims, and of the edicts of Aśoka (*infra*, p. 458 ff.), all of which are exceedingly valuable sources of information as to the social and religious condition of the country at the dates at which they were composed. The Aśoka edicts however illustrate contemporary Buddhism, but throw no light on the conflicts or tendencies of Hindu thought. Real historical works were composed in the extreme north-east and north-west of India, in Assam and in Kashmīr, but the latter records especially are much confused with unreliable and exaggerated tradition. See G. A. Grierson, in *Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxv., p. 57 ff.; E. A. Gait, *History of Assam*, Calcutta, 1906; *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅginī, a Chronicle of the Kings of Kaśmīr*, transl. with Introduction, etc., by M. A. Stein, London, 1900. A further reason, there can be little doubt, for the comparative neglect of exact historical record is to be found in the influence of the current philosophy. Where all was *māyā*, the details of date and of the continuity or succession of events were of absolutely no importance, and did not deserve a moment's thought or care from those whose minds were occupied with higher and spiritual matters.

the last word has not been spoken, either by the ancient literature and monuments or by the modern investigator. On these it is inevitable that further light should be awaited before the religious history of the time can be definitely traced.

Theistic Character of the Popular Religions

A strongly marked feature of the so-called popular or sectarian religions of India is their theistic character, the recognition of personal divinities present and active in their regard and care for men. Often the creed approaches to monotheism, in so far as one god is supreme over all the rest who are conceived as invested with inferior attributes and receive restricted homage. More often it is frankly and generously polytheistic, with an indefinite number of gods and godlings, who exercise a variety of functions, and to each of whom an appropriate sphere of influence is assigned. They are beneficent or malign, inclined to favour or do hurt, more usually the latter; and are sometimes mere names, whose supposed indifference to the wellbeing of mankind is requited by an entire neglect of their worship. In its general character that worship is propitiatory, endeavouring by sacrifice charm or prayer to avert the wrath of the powers of evil, and to keep at a distance the misfortunes which they are disposed to inflict.

Popular Superstitions and Demonolatry

This is practically and for the larger part of India the religion of the village folk,—if indeed it can be called a religion, and not rather an assortment of ideas about the unseen neither classified nor defined, nor brought into agreement,—of the labouring agricultural population, who have neither time nor inclination for

the abstractions and generalisations of philosophy, or for aught else but the demands and needs of daily food. The large majority of the inhabitants of India are resident in villages of but moderate size; and of those who thus spend their lives in the villages, by far the greater number, while often apt disputants and natural philosophers, are victims at heart of the terrors of popular superstitions. These fears have sometimes indeed been exaggerated, as though they poisoned and rendered miserable the entire life; but to the ordinary peasant they are very real. This aspect or variety of Hinduism implies therefore the worship of demons, of the spirits of the earth and air, of deified men and restless ghosts, of animals plants and stones, the worship of anything and everything that is in the heaven above or the earth beneath or the waters under the earth. There is hardly a primitive belief existing in any part of the world but its representative may be found amongst the heterogeneous conceptions and faiths of the masses of India. And to the accepted and well-known objects of their reverence and fear they are always ready to make additions, and to enlarge their already comprehensive pantheon as authority or fancy may dictate.

Bhāgavatas

An early and widely influential form of the popular religion was that of the *Bhāgavatas*, the worshippers of *Bhagavad*, the Lord or Blessed One,[1] whose religious text-book was the Bhagavadgītā,[2] and later the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. The watchword of the faith was *bhakti*, love or mystical devotion and clinging

[1] Dr. Grierson and others have discussed the meaning and associations of the title. The former renders the name 'the Adorable,' as the nearest English equivalent.

[2] *infra*, p. 366 ff.

of the soul to the object of its worship. On account of this and other features of the Bhāgavata religion many have seen in it Christian influence; and it is possible, or even probable, that in its later stages it borrowed elements or doctrines from Christianity with which it had much affinity. The word *bhakti* however occurs with this meaning as early as the Upanishads, in a passage which there is no reason to believe to be a late interpolation.[1] In their origin therefore the Bhāgavatas certainly drew their inspiration from native sources, and owed nothing to Western example or teaching. Their religion centred in a personal devotion and love, expressed by the term *bhakti*, to a personal and supreme god, who might be known by different names, as Bhagavat, Nārāyaṇa, etc., or be identified with one of the great Hindu gods, as Rāma or Krishṇa, but whose chief attribute was grace or mercy, and a tender regard for his creatures which did not permit him to let them go or to cease to endeavour to secure their salvation. He is the infinite and eternal Creator of all things, and has himself become incarnate on many occasions to deliver the world from sorrow and from sin. A further incarnation is to take place in the future. The human soul that becomes resigned to God in perfect submission and devotion to Him (*bhakti*) is thereby delivered from all evil, and lives henceforth and after death a life of conscious bliss which will have no end.

In their philosophical teaching, therefore, the Bhāgavatas were more closely related to the Sāṅkhya and the Yoga than to the Vedānta. Their mystical doctrines appealed with great force to the Indian nature in one of its most marked and characteristic features. And without becoming identified with

[1] *Parā bhaktiḥ*, supreme devotion, S'vet. Up. vi. 23.

any one of the officially recognised sectarian forms of religion, or confined within any limits of sect or caste, it gained adherents throughout the whole of India and probably at any given time its followers were in reality more numerous than was either tabulated or known.

Relation to Vaishnavism

Of the two great sectarian religions, the affinity between Vaishnavism[1] and the Bhāgavata creed is very close. Many Vaishnavites as far as the spirit of their religious faith is concerned are Bhāgavatas; and those of the latter who direct their worship to Kṛishṇa or Vishṇu might without difficulty find a place, as many of them do, within the broad shelter of the Vaishnavite name. One of the leading divisions or sects of Vaishnavism is by some authorities classed as a part of the Bhāgavata form of religion. The latter, however, can hardly be said to have any definite organisation.[2]

[1] *infra*, pp. 350 f., 365 ff.

[2] The leading exponent of the Bhāgavata creed in England is Dr. G. A. Grierson. See his articles, *Trans. Third Intern. Congress for the Hist. of Religions*, 1908, vol. ii., p. 44 ff., and *Gleanings from the Bhakta-Māla*, *JRAS*, 1909 p. 621 ff., 1910 pp. 87 ff., 159 ff.; *ERE*, vol. ii., art. *Bhakti-Mārga*, p. 541 ff. The Bhakta-Māla is a comparatively late work, containing a summary of doctrine and rules of faith. Cp. also R. Garbe, in the Introduction to his translation of the Bhagavadgītā, Leipzig, 1905, p. 28 ff. Dr. Grierson regards this monotheistic type of religion in India as a development of ancient sun worship. The founder was Kṛishṇa Vāsudeva, who at a later period, but before the fourth century B.C., was regarded as divine by his followers. There are now four divisions of Bhāgavatas, existing since the revival of the faith in the twelfth century, known as *sampradāyas*, or sects. These are the Sanakādi-sampradāya, founded by Nimbāditya; the S'ri-sampradāya, founded by Rāmānuja; the Brahma-sampradāya, founded by Madhva; and the Rudra-sampradāya, founded by Vishṇu-svāmin.

Hinduism

The broad and somewhat vague term Hinduism is usually employed in a comprehensive sense to denote all these later and more popular developments of belief and worship in India; the precise relationship of which to ancient Brāhmanism, or the measure of their indebtedness to its influence and teaching, it is impossible to determine. Of some of them, as of the Bhāgavata faith itself, the origins are of hardly less antiquity than the orthodox ritual and creed of the Brāhmans. *Hinduism*, however, is the general title for all the forms under which the religious consciousness of the people of India has found expression; and the link or internal connection between the diverse creeds which pass under this name is of the very slightest—a recognition of common divinities and temples, and of the rights and prerogatives of their priests, the Brāhmans. There is no common article of faith or obligation of morality, and the adherence to forms or religious duties is often superficial, and in recent times especially is greatly relaxed. The real and most powerful bond of union is social. A Hindu is born, not made. Caste has been, and is at the present time, the compelling influence which welds into the semblance of a unity the multitude of diverse and often conflicting professions which claim to be parts of the Hindu faith. To the force of caste must now be added the newly-born consciousness, which indeed is much more of a wish than of a fact, of national unity. A national religion is invoked to give authority and sanction to aspirations which have nothing to do with religion. The former therefore is upheld and emphasized, and internal differences minimised or altogether ignored. In reality however Hinduism is undefinable in religious terms.

There are, therefore, many divisions or sects of modern Hinduism not always mutually exclusive. The two that are most prominent and important are known as *Vaishnavism* and *S'aivism*; and to one or other of these every Hindu, with few exceptions, who claims to be strict and intelligent in his religious observance, attaches himself. The adherents of the former recognise Vishnu as their supreme deity and pay honour to him above all other divinities in one or other of his various forms. Most if not all Bhāgavatas are also Vaishnavites, identifying the supreme object of their worship, *Bhagavad*, the Blessed One, with Vishnu. The S'aivites similarly assign to S'iva the position of pre-eminence. The worshippers of Vishnu are on the whole more numerous throughout India and are increasing in repute and influence; those of S'iva preponderate in the south. Of each of these again, especially of Vaishnavism, there are numerous sub-divisions, minor sects which acknowledge a human founder or teacher, whose name they usually bear, and to whom in many instances divine or semi-divine honours are paid. Regarded as a whole they may be said to give expression in their practice and faith to the ritualistic and philosophical side of Modern Hinduism.

Sects of Hinduism

Lastly, the strong syncretistic tendency of the Hindu mind, as well as its deeply religious and devotional character, has found expression in the reform movements and sects, which have been inspired by contact with external faiths and have more or less consciously imbibed their spirit. It is not perhaps easy to say at how early a date movements of this nature may have arisen or in fact did arise in India.

Movements of Reform

A strong impulse, however, towards monotheism was given by the action and example of Muhammadanism in the sixteenth century. In recent times the influence of Christian ideas and teaching has made itself felt throughout India, and many leaders of thought, men of high ideals and noble aims, have endeavoured to harmonize or combine that which they conceived to be best in the new doctrines with their old faith, and without breaking with the latter or rejecting its sacred books to assimilate all that seemed to them to be of most value in the religion of the West. Of these the *Brāhma-Samāj* and associations of a similar nature derived from it or that followed the same methods have been the most remarkable.[1] Their founders endeavoured as it were to purify Hinduism from within, and thus to present to their followers ideals and a faith which should be true to Indian modes of thought, while at the same time enriched and strengthened with whatever of good another faith or other faiths could offer. Probably the attempt was in its very nature doomed of necessity to failure. Religious eclecticism may be the philosophic creed of the few, but can never lay hold of the heart of the multitude. India however offered the fairest field for the trial.

Vaishnavism : Bhakti

Vaishnavism therefore has developed in many directions, has put on many forms, and has become sub-divided into many sects. These are however true to its main principles. And from the long conflict of creed and thought in India Vaishnavism in the broadest sense has emerged, not only the most popular form of faith, but certainly

[1] *infra*, p. 417 ff.

the truest exponent of the real heart and mind of the Indian peoples. Its leading conception is that of loyalty, devotion to a single supreme and personal deity. This idea is expressed by the Sanskrit term *bhakti*,[1] a word which is often but inadequately rendered 'faith.' *Bhakti* is the clinging affection of the heart, and has little or no concern with the intelligence or the will nor does it make any demand upon the moral consciousness. It is less open to misunderstanding, therefore, to retain the technical term, for which no exact equivalent is to be found in English. Vaishnavism is the most spiritual of the many faiths of India, the least wedded to mere form and ceremony, and better worthy of the name of a religion than any other of the creeds or cults that have grown up on Indian soil. Its likeness in many respects to Christianity will not escape notice; the differences however are as fundamental and impressive as the resemblances.

Of this system or creed the supreme divinity is *Vishṇu*, who appears under many forms or incarnations. His name is said to be derived from a root *vish*, meaning to 'spread through,' 'pervade.' *Vishṇu* therefore is the all-pervader, the god who is present everywhere and in all things. In the Rigveda his chief characteristic is found in the three strides in which he compasses the three worlds.[2] He is there invoked, although with no great frequency, by the side of other well-known Vedic deities, especially Indra and his companions the Maruts; but superiority to these is never claimed for him. It is only in the later literature that he rises to the first

Vishṇu

[1] *supra*, p. 345 f.

[2] *supra*, p. 222 f.; Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 37 ff.

rank, and that his chief mythological traits, including the so-called incarnations, are developed.

It is not easy to assign a date to this advance in popularity and worship, or a reason for the prominent place which the cult of Vishṇu assumed as compared with the other deities of the Vedic pantheon. Two causes however amongst others were contributory to the rapid growth of his fame and the general acceptance of his supremacy. In the first place Vishṇu was a sun-god, and the blazing orb of day has always held a high position in the estimation and reverence of the peoples of India. Under circumstances again which are obscure or altogether unknown he came to be identified with popular heroes of tradition, whose semi-divine character was enhanced by their identification with the god, while the latter became heir to the regard and esteem in which they were traditionally held. The early centuries of our era probably witnessed the greater part of this gradual rise to power and dominion.[1]

In the great Hindu *Tri-mūrti*, or Triad, Vishṇu occupies the second place, and has then assigned to him the office of Preserver, as to Brahmā that of Creator, and to Śiva of Destroyer. Equally with these also he is an emanation from the sole and supreme divine essence, Brahma, the first beginning and originating cause of all. This triad of divinities is represented by the mystical sacred syllable *Om*,[2]

[1] Cp. the conclusion of J. Kennedy in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 974:—'Vishṇu, the latest of the Vedic gods to start on a great career, had become the chief personal embodiment of the divine essence by the second century A.D.; and by the fifth century he had assimilated to himself Krishṇa of Dwāraka, the ancient hero-god of the N.W. frontier, whose star had long been in the ascendant.'

[2] *supra*, p. 230 f. The origin of the syllable and of its sacred character are alike unknown. Monier Williams suggests that the three sounds of which it is composed, *a u m*, are the initial letters of the members of an original triad, Agni Vāyu or Varuṇa and Mitra, or Fire, Wind, and the Sun; see *Brāhmanism*

which, already in the Upanishads the object of profound reverence and the theme of religious meditation, is later explained to typify the three supreme gods, *a* being the symbol of Vishṇu, *u* of S'iva, and *m* of Brahmā. Subsequently however, and in the estimation of those peculiarly devoted to his worship, Vishnu became the acknowledged lord of all. To him all the other gods are subordinate, and together with men and spirits they render him homage.

Relation of Theistic Faiths to Brāhmanism

This conception of a *personal* god, who stands alone without an equal or a rival, may be justly said to be the distinguishing feature of the sectarian religions, as contrasted with ancient Brāhmanism or a mere philosophical or literary cult. They recognise a supreme Personal Deity. The pantheistic idea of a featureless all-pervading intangible divine essence, whence everything proceeds and into which everything returns, is subordinated to an active faith in the reality of the spiritual world; and although theoretically maintained becomes practically unimportant. A Divine Person, of whom personal attributes and actions are predicated, presides over all, and is the source of all influence and power and grace. It does not follow however that this conception is really later in point of time than that of *Brahman*, the indefinite

and Hinduism[4], p. 10. Max Müller (*Six Systems*, 1899, p. 423) thinks that *om* is possibly a contraction of *avam* = *ayam*, 'this,' and compares Fr. *oui* = hoc illud. *Om* is Brahman, and the loftiest and most abstract symbol of Brahman, *supra*, p. 275; see also *SBE*, vol. I., *s.v.*, and cp. Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Phil.*, i. 1 pp. 183, 257, *Phil. of the Upan.*, pp. 59, 116 f., etc. H. Baynes in *Ind. Antiq.*, xxvi. (1897) p. 173 ff. The syllable *Om* is equally sacred among the Buddhists, cp. *infra*, p. 583 f.

and absolute unknown; although historically and in the literary development it presents itself at a later period in the evolution of Indian religious thought. Nor again is the inference justified that the former more vivid and imaginative theory of the universe and its ruler was merely grafted into the stock of a barren and negative philosophy, and by its superior vitality drew into itself whatever of living force the other still retained. In all probability the two lines of thought, the material and philosophical and the spiritual and theistic, existed side by side; and the religious systems, as they are known and professed to-day, are the fruits of a compromise, in which the more human and sympathetic element has come naturally to predominate. But if either be the older, then it is certainly not the refined philosophy which must be concluded to antedate the personal conception and rule of the unseen world.

Vaishnavism therefore from this point of view is rightly considered to be a monotheistic religion, if the term be understood to mean a religion in which one god stands alone at the head, without excluding the possibility of the existence of other inferior deities. In the same sense and with the same limitations Śaivism also is monotheistic. In both systems however the pantheistic ideas, so congenial to the Indian mind, lie scarcely hidden beneath the surface. They co-exist with the other, apparently contradictory doctrines and beliefs occupying as it were different compartments of the mind. And a harmony between them is hardly sought. The strictly monotheistic theory moreover allied itself in practice with an endless diversity, and permitted an unlimited multiplication of gods and goddesses of every rank and order, according to the will or fancy

of their worshippers; so that the professors of a theoretical monotheism became in most instances practical polytheists.

Vishṇu himself, who is thus exalted to the supreme rank, is regarded as combining in his own person the qualities or characters of all three members of the Hindu Triad, that is of Brahmā as Creator, and of S'iva as Destroyer, in addition to his peculiar province or office of Preserver. As lord of the universe and of the other gods he exercises every prerogative of power and uncontrolled dominion. He has his own especial heaven *Vaikuntha*,[2] situated in the region of the north on Mount Meru, where he dwells in eternal repose with his wife *Lakshmī*, Good Fortune, or *S'rī*, Prosperity. Lakshmī is said to have arisen from the foam of the ocean, and she is made the object of an independent and widely-spread worship. By his followers Vishnu is reverenced under a thousand different names, expressive of various aspects of his nature and character, and the mere repetition of these is an act of worship. He is usually represented with a peculiarly auspicious mark on his breast called *S'rī-vatsa*, perhaps meaning 'the darling of S'rī,' in the form of a curl of hair, said to be white and like a cruciform flower. In his hands he bears a conch-shell, which is blown as a signal

Vishṇu[1]

[1] On variant forms of the name see Sten Konow in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 1053 f., and a note by G. A. Grierson, *ib.*, 1908, p. 164. Dr. Konow writes that 'Viṣṭu is probably a corruption of Vishṇu. The latter name is universally pronounced as Biṣṭu by Bengali pandits at the present day. The parallel forms Viṭhū, etc., make it probable that the Veṭhadīpa of the Pāli literature is the same as Visṇudvīpa found on seals.'

[2] 'Not blunted,' 'not dulled,' and so 'ever fresh.' Monier-Williams, *s.v.*

for battle; a *ćakra* or discus, perhaps originally merely a sacred symbol like the Buddhist wheel of the law, but later a weapon of offence; a club; and a lotus-flower. The swan or goose bears in relation to him a sacred character, and often appears in figure or sculpture by his side.[1] He rides upon *Garuḍa*, the mythical eagle or vulture, king of birds and the destroyer of serpents; and the river Ganges issues from his feet. Those who put their trust in him, and worship him aright by the way of *bhakti*, he exalts to a place in his own heaven Vaikuṇṭha. Vaishnavites bear on their forehead a mark made with white or coloured earths, which varies slightly in its form in the different sects, but which is always shaped somewhat like a trident, intended to denote the impress of the foot or feet of the god,—an outward and visible sign of their profession and faith.

Avatāras of Vishṇu

The god who is thus exalted and reverenced is seldom if ever found entering into direct communication with his worshippers. He comes into contact with men only through his *avatāras* or 'descents,' when he 'descends' from heaven to earth, and appears in bodily

[1] For illustrations from sculptures see *e.g.* A. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, pp. 49 ff., 110, who points out the similarity of some of the stories of Garuḍa to the Greek legend of Ganymede. The Garuḍas formed a whole class of inferior divinities or demi-gods, like the Nāgas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, etc. The myth relating to Garuḍa is of considerable antiquity, and is probably solar in its origin, Garuḍa being the sun-bird or phoenix. It appears also that more than one species has been identified with the royal Garuḍa in different parts of India. The word is said to be derived from the root *gṛī*, to consume, devour, either as the snake-devourer, or with reference to the scorching and devouring heat of the sun.

shape.[1] These *avatāras* are sometimes termed incarnations, and have been erroneously described as offering a parallel to the Christian doctrine. The resemblance however is entirely verbal and superficial; and beyond the fact that in each religion the deity is understood to have presented himself in visible and tangible form there is no likeness between the two. The leading conception in the *avatāras* of Vishṇu is that for a particular purpose some portion of the essence of the god 'descended' and incorporated itself with the body of a man or animal, so that he or it became for the time being identified to a greater or less degree with the deity, and possessed of his attributes. The larger the portion of his essence that was received the more striking and important the *avatāra*, the more sacred and to be revered the creature or person into whom he entered. Such a person became to all intents and purposes a god. The *avatāras* of the god therefore admitted of degrees, and in fact as ordinarily related appear to have been designed to exhibit a gradation in importance, the earlier being partial and incomplete, while the later approach in succession more nearly to an ideal perfectness, which is yet to be reached in the last and greatest of the *avatāras*, still in the future. Thus the three first as ordinarily enumerated are in animal form; the fourth is semi-human; the fifth, dwarfish; the sixth, a human hero; the seventh, a divine prince, etc. There is considerable analogy

[1] On the *avatāras* of Vishṇu see Monier-Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*[4], p. 107 ff., and Dict., *s.v.*; Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 468 ff.; Frazer, *Literary History of India*, p. 339 f.; and for the doctrine as elaborated in the Bhāgavata literature, G. A. Grierson, in *JRAS*, 1909, p. 621 ff., *ERE*, ii. p. 542.

between these descents of Vishṇu and the various appearances of the Buddha for the salvation of mankind, as taught in the Buddhist religion.[1] They are all somewhat strikingly distinguished also from the incarnations of other Indian gods in that they are uniformly represented as undertaken for a beneficent purpose, the deliverance of the world of men or of the gods from tyranny and harm.

The number of these 'descents' is differently stated. The most important are usually given as ten, and their date and order are traditionally fixed. Elsewhere however reference is made to twelve, twenty-two, or twenty-eight avatāras, and finally they are declared to be innumerable. They can hardly indeed be said to have yet ceased in India, for even at the present time any man of peculiar sanctity or force of character is regarded as possessed by a portion of Vishṇu's essence, with a claim therefore to honour and worship as a manifestation of the god. To these ten however has been given so considerable a place in Indian religious thought, and they have formed the basis and starting-point of so widespread a mythology and popular belief, that some brief account of them is desirable.

(1) The first is the *matsya*, or 'fish' avatāra. Vishṇu took the form of a fish in order to deliver Manu, the primeval man, a kind of Hindu Noah, in the time of the Deluge.[2] The fish drew Manu's ship to the northern mountain, where he descended in safety, and offered sacrifice to the gods.

[1] Cp. *infra*, p. 577 f.

[2] *supra*, p. 246 f. The similarity to the Biblical account is obvious, but the probability of direct borrowing on either side is not great. In *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*[2], ch. ix., A. Jeremias has collected and translated the extra-Biblical narratives of a flood, including the Indian (p. 236 f.).

(2) The *kūrma*, or 'tortoise' avatāra. During the flood a number of valuable objects had been lost, including the moon, a beautiful nymph, the precious stone *kaustubha*, the cow of riches, and a deadly poison. The last when recovered is said to have been drunk by S'iva to save mankind from the peril of death thereby. In order to rescue these Vishṇu imparted of his essence to a huge tortoise, which then took its stand at the bottom of the ocean of milk that encircled the earth. On the back of the tortoise was placed a mountain, and around the mountain the serpent *Vāsuki* coiled itself to serve as a rope. The opposite ends of the snake were then grasped by the gods and the demons, who by the aid of serpent and mountain churned the ocean, until one by one the lost treasures reappeared on the surface.[1]

(3) The third avatāra is that of the 'boar,' *varāha*. The earth itself had been lost in the depths of the ocean, having been carried off by a demon. The boar, animated by the god, dived after it, fought the demon for a thousand years, and in triumph brought back the earth.

(4) The *narasiṁha*, or 'man-lion' avatāra. The powerful tyrant, Hiraṇya-kaśipu, had obtained from Brahmā a promise that neither god nor man nor animal should be able to destroy him. Relying on this invulnerability he had usurped the dominion of the three worlds, and had even diverted to himself the sacrifices intended for the gods. Vishṇu overcame and slew him by appearing in a shape that was neither god nor man nor animal. These four avatāras all occurred in the first, the *satya* age of the world.

(5) In the second or *tretā* age of the world Vishṇu

[1] *Rāmāyaṇa*, i. 45.

entered into the form of a dwarf, *vāmana*, in order to destroy the demon Bali, who had attained to supreme dominion over the three worlds, and used his power to defy the gods and injure mankind. Presenting himself before the demon as a dwarf, Vishṇu is said to have begged for the gift of as much land as he could cover in three steps. Bali granted his request; and the dwarf, at once expanding to a gigantic size, in two steps traversed heaven and earth, rescuing them from the sway of the demon; then stopped, and allowed the lower world to remain under Bali's control.[1]

(6) The sixth avatāra is in the person of *Paraśu-Rāma*, or *Rāma of the Battle-Axe*, a great Brāhman hero, who twenty-one times destroyed the entire Kshatriya race, the royal and warrior caste, from the face of the earth. The legend is clearly reminiscent of early rivalries and conflicts between the warrior and priestly classes in North India, conducted with recurring violence and persecution on the side of the Kshatriyas, from which the Brāhmans finally emerged victorious.[2] Later the virtue of the essence of Vishṇu is said to have departed from him, and he was then overcome and slain by *Rāma*, in whom the seventh and hitherto most important manifestation of the god took place.

(7) *Rāma*, or *Rāmaćandra* as he is named to distinguish him from other *Rāmas*, is the celebrated

[1] *Śatap. Br.*, i. 2. 5. 1; *Rāmāy.*, i. 31.

[2] Cp. A. B. Keith in *JRAS*, 1908, p. 868 ff., in a review of Prof. Garbe's *Beiträge zur indischen Kulturgeschichte*, Berlin, 1903. Mr. Keith combats the view maintained by Prof. Garbe and Dr. P. Deussen that to the Kshatriyas is due in large measure the preservation of a living and fruitful intellectual tradition in India. On the other hand it must be remembered that the literary tradition was preserved and handed down by Brāhmans, who were not likely to minimise their own importance.

hero of the Rāmāyaṇa, the model son and husband, one of the most popular and widely worshipped of the gods of India at the present day. He was the son of Daśaratha, king of Ayodhyā or Oudh, who reigned towards the end of the second age of the world. Banished from his father's kingdom through the jealousy of Kaikeyī, he went into exile in the forest country of the south. Thither his faithful wife *Sītā* followed him, and thence in the temporary absence of Rāma she was carried off by *Rāvaṇa*, the demon-king of Ceylon. With the aid of *Hanumān*, the 'heavy' or 'large-jawed' one, son of the wind and semi-divine chief or leader of the monkey race, Rāma made a bridge of rocks to the island, which he then entered, and having slain Rāvaṇa recovered his wife, with whom he was subsequently restored to his kingdom in Oudh. Both *Sītā* and *Hanumān* are widely reverenced as gods, the former being regarded as an incarnation of S'rī, the wife of Vishṇu; and numerous shrines and images are erected in their honour. There is reason to believe that Rāma was originally a lunar deity, god of the months and of agriculture. His reign, after his return to his kingdom, is described as the golden age of happiness and prosperity in India.[1]

(8) The eighth avatāra took place at the end of the third, or *dvāpara*[2] age of the world, when

[1] The story of Rāma is contained in the great epic poem of the Rāmāyaṇa, *supra*, p. 333 ff. The name of the country over which Rāvaṇa ruled, and from which Rāma rescued his wife, is given as *Laṅkā*, which is usually explained as the ancient name of Ceylon. There is however some doubt as to whether the writer really had the island of Ceylon in mind. In the original text Laṅkā is repeatedly termed *purī*, a city (Rāmāy., i. 1, 69, 73 *al.*). Cp. Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 251, note.

[2] There is some doubt as to the origin of the application of these terms, dvāpara and tretā, to the third and second ages of

Krishṇa, the 'dark' or 'swarthy' prince, was born near Delhi, imbued with the spirit and wisdom of the god. He is represented accordingly as brave and warlike, but at the same time crafty and false and habitually guilty of the grossest immorality. The son of Vasudeva and Devakī, he became an object of hatred and fear to his uncle, king Kaṁsa, to whom an oracle had declared that the eighth son of Devakī should put him to death, and who therefore schemed

the world respectively. One of the earliest references to them is found in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa :—'A man who sleeps is like the Kali age ; a man who awakes is like the Dvāpara age ; a man who rises is like the Tretā age ; a man who travels is like the Kṛita age.' It seems clear that their use in this connection is derived from terms of play with dice. *Dvāpara* is a throw or cast of two, *tretā* of three. *Kṛita*, which properly signifies 'done,' 'accomplished,' seems to denote the 'perfect' throw. The *kṛita* age is otherwise known as *satya*, true, good. The *kali* is the bad present age, the worst of the four. 'In the kali age . . . the minds of men will be wholly occupied in acquiring wealth, and wealth will be spent solely on selfish gratifications. Women will follow their inclinations, and be ever fond of pleasure. Men will fix their desires upon riches even though dishonestly acquired. No man will part with the smallest fraction of the smallest coin, though entreated by a friend. . . . There will never be abundance in the kali age, and men will never enjoy pleasure and happiness. . . . The women will be fickle, short of stature, gluttonous ; they will have many children and little means. . . . They will be selfish, abject, and slatternly ; they will be scolds and liars. . . . Householders will neither sacrifice, nor practise becoming liberality. . . . Princes, instead of protecting, will plunder their subjects,' etc., etc. *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, vi. 1, see Frazer, p. 341 f. The kali age began 3102 B.C., and is to last altogether 432,000 years. At its close the world is to come to an end, and all things will be received back into the primeval essence or substance out of which they sprang. In *Manu* i. 86 the duties or characteristics of the several ages are described as penance, knowledge, sacrifice, and generosity respectively. On the technical terms cp. also A. B. Keith in *JRAS*, 1908, p. 825 f.

to anticipate the oracle by slaying Kṛishṇa. In order to place the boy beyond the reach of his uncle he was transferred as soon as born to the care of a herdsman, who brought him up as his own son. Hence Kṛishṇa is especially the god of shepherds, and of the lower castes in general. His youth was devoted to hunting and sport, varied by combats with robbers and demons. On arriving at manhood he fulfilled the prediction of the oracle, and became king of the Yādavas in the stead of his uncle Kaṁsa. After a prolonged reign he was himself slain, like Achilles, by a chance arrow in the heel. Kṛishṇa is a prominent figure in the Mahābhārata, the ancient epic of India, and the legends concerning him are the most varied and numerous that cluster round any single figure of the entire Hindu pantheon. He is said to have had 108,000 sons; and countless wives, of whom the chief was *Rādhā*, one of the shepherdesses with whom he sported in his youthful days. She is sometimes, like Sītā, regarded as an avatāra of Lakshmī, the wife of Vishṇu.[1]

[1] The legends of Kṛishṇa are recounted at great length in the *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, book v. The resemblance between the stories told of him and the early Christian narratives is too great to be ascribed to mere accident. The borrowing however, under whatever circumstances it has taken place, is certainly on the Indian side; cp. G. A. Grierson in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 498, *ERE*, ii. p. 549; Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 469. On the history and growth of the legends concerning Kṛishṇa see especially important arts. by J. Kennedy, *JRAS*, 1907, p. 951 ff., 1908 p. 505 ff., and a criticism by A. B. Keith, *ib.*, 1908, p. 169 ff. The legends are conflate, the stories told concerning more than one original Kṛishṇa having been combined. In the view of Mr. Kennedy there were at least three of these, an ancient heroic chieftain of Dwāraka, the divine Kṛishṇa son of Devakī, and the child-god of Mathurā, whose legendary history is of much more recent origin (*l.c.*, p. 961 ff.; the relation of the legends to Christianity is discussed *ib.* p. 975 ff.). By

(9) The ninth avatāra is as *Buddha*, the 'enlightened' one. The founder of Buddhism has thus been adopted by the Brāhmans into their religion, with the comprehensive tolerance or indifference which is one of the characteristics of the Hindu faith. Similarly many would be prepared at the present day to adopt the Founder of Christianity, and to represent Him as a new avatāra of their god.

(10) The tenth 'descent' of Vishṇu is still in the future. He will appear as *Kalki*, the liberator, at the close of the present age when the world has become hopelessly corrupt, to destroy the wicked and to bring back the age of purity. Hinduism therefore, in theory at least, looks for a coming Deliverer.

The doctrine of *avatāras*, 'descents' or incarnations of the deity, is not confined in India to Vaishnavite sects. It occupies, however, a more distinct and prominent place in their teaching than elsewhere. And in estimating its importance for the religious life and thought of the Indian peoples it is necessary to bear in mind how entirely these stories of Rāma and Kṛishṇa have captivated the imagination and become part of the national heritage of belief; so that it is not Vishṇu himself who is worshipped in his own character, but rather Vishṇu in one or other of these his earthly manifestations. And not only the outline but the details of the stories themselves are as closely, perhaps more closely interwoven with the thought and mind of the people than the narratives of the gospels or the dramatic

Greek writers Kṛishṇa was identified with Dionysus. Black was a colour of ill omen, and the name may not improbably have had some reflex influence on the character of the legends.

representations of Milton with the sentiments and presuppositions of the population of Great Britain. It is not possible to form a just estimate of present-day facts and beliefs unless account be taken of the mythology, and the more or less conscious prepossessions and ideas that constitute the background, as it were, on which they rest.

Vaishnavite Doctrines

The numerous sects and divisions of the Vaishnavites hold in common certain fundamental beliefs and doctrines, which admit of being broadly and clearly stated. But the doctrinal distinctions between the sects are often subtle and difficult to grasp. The belief in a personal deity, to whom men owe and may refuse allegiance, involves them necessarily in a practical opposition to the philosophical dogma of *advaita*; although they may theoretically declare themselves Vedāntists, and maintain in argument the distinctive metaphysics of the system. Manifestly however there can be no union or compromise between Vaishnavite belief on this point and the materialistic philosophy of the Sāṅkhya in its extreme and generally accepted form. In general therefore the profession of the Vaishnavite faith is found in combination with the idealist speculations of the Vedānta; and S'aivism, on the contrary, allies itself with the Sāṅkhya. Through all their teaching moreover there runs a strong vein of mysticism, which shows itself in an excess of refinement, and an artificial elaboration of theories and speculations which in the first instance have doubtless been inherited or adopted from ancient Brāhmanism. The doctrine of *bhakti* may serve as an example; simple and natural in itself, it is in practice made the occasion for mystical developments and the theme of extravagant poetical raptures. This reliance

upon a personal divinity, faith in and devotion to Kṛishṇa, Rāma, or some other manifestation of the supreme god, taught and enforced as the necessary condition of salvation, is the first distinctive mark of all forms of the Vaishnavite faith.

Bhagavad-Gītā

The element of mysticism is perhaps most apparent and pronounced in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, or 'Song of Bhagavad' or 'of the Blessed.' The title is an indication of its probable original connection with the sect or religion of the Bhāgavatas,[1] and it has continued to be the popular text-book or summary of religious teaching for the theistic sects of India. To many the Bhagavad-Gītā, or Gītā, as it is often called, is a cherished manual of devotion as well as a guide to faith, and occupies a not dissimilar place in the affectionate regard of many Hindus to that of the New Testament in Christian belief.[2] In its present form it is found as an episode in the Mahābhārata in book vi., the *Bhīshma-parvan*, wherein Kṛishṇa, in the disguise of charioteer to Arjuna, the best and noblest of the Pāṇḍava brothers, expounds the mystery of his being and of the purpose and destiny of the universe. Arjuna is reluctant to fight against his cousins, seeing no gain either in victory or defeat; and Kṛishṇa in a long

[1] *supra*, p. 345 ff.

[2] The late Dr. Pennell describes one of the *sādhus* or Hindu ascetics whom he met in the Panjāb, a man of simple and self-denying life, whose constant companion this book was. 'I am quite happy in this life . . . for when my heart is lonely I read in my copy of the *Bhagvad Gita* and get consolation, and I like that better than any other book because it makes my heart glad.'—*Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier*, London, 1909, p. 235.

philosophical discourse, which interrupts the action of the main poem, urges him to take up his arms, and play the part of a valiant hero. The two keynotes, as it were, of the poem may indeed be said to be 'action' and 'devotion,' *bhakti*. But the whole forms a strange mixture of dreamy speculation with practical injunctions to be up and doing, of elevated thought with uncontrolled imagination, of profound conceptions of duty and of God with fanciful theorisings concerning the constitution and meaning of the universe, all wrapped in the garb and phraseology of a philosophy that seems to borrow its terms now from the Vedānta and now from the Sāṅkhya system.

It is possible that the apparent confusion or interchange of terminology is due to the fact that at the date of composition of the poem these technical terms had not yet received their special and limited connotation. A more probable explanation, however, is that the parts of the song are themselves of different date and authorship, and that the various *strata* as it were of the poem betray the tendencies and aims of more than one philosophical system. The original author is unknown. It is however most probable that in its earliest form the Bhagavad-Gītā belongs to a period before the Christian era, but that it has undergone subsequent modification and expansion, perhaps at several different periods. In its origin also it was entirely independent of the Mahābhārata, but has been inserted in the greater epic at what appeared to be an opportune moment for the delivery of philosophical views and directions. It is perhaps the best known and most famous of all the notable products of Indian thought; and presents the distinctive

speculations and devotional feelings of Indian writers in their most characteristic form.

The theme that action is better than inaction is developed in the following passages, amongst many others. Krishṇa is the speaker.[1]

> In this world there is a twofold path—that of the Sāṅkhyas by devotion in the shape of (true) knowledge; and that of the Yogins by devotion in the shape of action.[2] A man does not attain freedom from action merely by not engaging in action; nor does he attain perfection by mere renunciation. For nobody ever remains even for an instant without performing some action; since the qualities of nature constrain everybody, not having free-will (in the matter), to some action. . . . Do you perform prescribed action, for action is better than inaction, and the support of your body too cannot be accomplished with inaction. . . . Therefore always perform action, which must be performed, without attachment. For a man, performing action without attachment, attains the Supreme.[3]
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Renunciation and pursuit of action are both instruments of happiness. But of the two pursuit of action is superior to renunciation of action. . . . Children—not wise men—talk of sāṅkhya and yoga as distinct. One who pursues either well obtains the fruit of both.[4]

All right action however must be based upon knowledge, the knowledge of the Supreme, which is described or defined in similar language to that of the Upanishads :—

> I will declare that which is the object of knowledge, knowing which one reaches immortality; the highest Brahman, having

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[1] The translations are from *SBE*, vol. viii.[2], Oxford, 1898.

[2] *Jñānayoga, karmayoga*; the 'discipline of knowledge,' and the 'discipline of work.'

[3] iii. 3–19.

[4] v. 2–4.

no beginning nor end, which cannot be said to be existent or non-existent. . . . Possessed of the qualities of all the senses, (but) devoid of all senses, unattached, it supports all, is devoid of qualities and the enjoyer of qualities. It is within all things and without them; it is movable and also immovable; it is unknowable through (its) subtlety; it stands afar and near. . . . It is knowledge, the object of knowledge, that which is to be attained to by knowledge, and placed in the heart of all.[1]

. . . . . .

Even if you are the most sinful of all sinful men, you will cross over all trespasses by means of the boat of knowledge alone.[2]

The following description of the self recalls again the thought of the Upanishads :—

He who thinks one to be the killer and he who thinks one to be killed, both know nothing. He kills not, is not killed. He is not born, nor does he ever die, nor having existed does he exist no more. Unborn, everlasting, unchangeable, and very ancient, he is not killed when the body is killed. O son of Pṛithā![3] how can that man who knows the self thus to be indestructible, everlasting, unborn, and imperishable, kill any one or cause any one to be killed? As a man, casting off old clothes, puts on others and new ones, so the embodied (self), casting off old bodies, goes to others and new ones. . . . It is everlasting, all-pervading, stable, firm, and eternal.[4]

Devotion to Kṛishṇa is the highest good :—

The devotee working with great efforts, and cleared of his sins, attains perfection after many births, and then reaches the supreme goal. The devotee is esteemed higher than the performers of penances, higher even than the men of knowledge, and the devotee is higher than the men of action; therefore, O Arjuna, become a devotee. And even among all devotees,

[1] xiii. 12–17.
[2] iv. 36.
[3] Arjuna.
[4] ii. 19–24.

he who being full of faith worships me, with his inmost self intent on me, is esteemed by me to be the most devoted.[1]

. . . . .

The highest happiness comes to such a devotee, whose mind is fully tranquil, in whom the quality of passion has been suppressed, who is free from sin, and who is become (one with) the Brahman. Thus constantly devoting his self to abstraction, a devotee, freed from sin, easily obtains that supreme happiness—contact with the Brahman. He who has devoted his self to abstraction, by devotion, looking alike on everything, sees the self abiding in all beings, and all beings in the self. To him who sees me in everything, and everything in me, I am never lost, and he is not lost to me.[2]

. . . . . .

Those who make vows to the gods go to the gods; those who make vows to the manes go to the manes; those who worship the Bhūtas[3] go to the Bhūtas; and those likewise who worship me go to me. Whoever with devotion offers me leaf, flower, fruit, water, that presented with devotion I accept from him whose self is pure. Whatever you do, O Son of Kuntī![4] whatever you eat, whatever sacrifice you make, whatever you give, whatever penance you perform, do that as offered to me. . . . Those who worship me with devotion (dwell) in me, and I too in them. Even if a very ill-conducted man worships me, not worshipping any one else, he must certainly be deemed to be good, for he has well resolved. He soon becomes devout of heart, and obtains lasting tranquillity. . . . Coming to this transient unhappy world, worship me. (Place your) mind on me, become my devotee, my worshipper; reverence me, and thus making me your highest goal, and devoting your self to abstraction, you will certainly come to me.[5]

The literature of the Bhagavad-Gītā is of very great extent, and additions of important works of comment and interpretation are constantly being made. Many works will be found

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[1] vi. 45–47; 'devotee' is *yogin*, one who practises *yoga*, by strenuous self-discipline or asceticism seeks to attain union with the Supreme.

[2] vi. 27–30.

[3] Spirits, or ghosts.

[4] Arjuna.

[5] ix. 25–34

referred to in the article in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 535 ff. The original Sanskrit text has been frequently published in India. Perhaps the best edition is that in the *Ānandāśrama* series with the commentary of S'aṅkara and full indices, Poona, 1897. There is a choice example of a small pocket edition in the British Museum, in book-form, in the Nāgarī character, written on leaves of hexagonal shape no larger than a florin. The Gītā has also been translated into most European languages. In the form which it has assumed in the epic the poem is undoubtedly composite, and has been adapted and interpolated, probably more than once, in the interests of doctrinal belief of various character. This is the key to the apparent contradictions and inconsistencies of its teaching. Dr. Garbe, who has devoted much study to the Gītā, regards the original nucleus of the book as theistic in character, expounding in a religious and devotional sense the tenets of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga philosophy; the prominence given to the mystical idealism of the Vedānta being due to a later recension, which introduced pantheistic views, and endeavoured to mould the poem into harmony with the more widely accepted philosophic thought. 'The real facts are that in the ancient poem a Kṛsnaism based upon the Sāṅkhya-Yoga philosophy is set forth; in the additions of the recension the Vedānta philosophy is taught' (*ERE*, ii. p. 536). Others however would reverse the order of the successive strata and find that the pantheistic doctrines belong to the primitive form of the poem, upon which the theistic teaching has later been superimposed. At some period also in the historical development and expansion of the work it is probable that Christian influences have made themselves felt. These however cannot have been a part of, or attached themselves to the original composition, the date of which must almost certainly be placed before the beginning of the Christian era.[1]

[1] Compare R. Garbe, art. *Bhagavad-Gītā* in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 535 ff., and *Die Bhagavadgītā aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt*, Leipzig, 1905. In his translation Dr. Garbe attempts to separate the later elements of the text from the earlier. English translations are by K. T. Telang in *SBE*, vol. viii.[2], Oxford, 1898; and by Dr. L. D. Barnett in the *Temple Classics*, London, 1905, with an admirable introduction. Reference may be made also to P. Deussen, *Allg. Gesch. d. Philosophie*, i. 3 p. 36 f.; E. W. Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 389 ff.; M. Winternitz, *Gesch. d. Indischen*

A second distinctive feature of all Vaishnavite sects is their reverence for the religious teacher.

The Guru

The *guru* exercises an influence unquestioned and profound. All the sects, however far they may have travelled in doctrine and discipline, trace their origin to the labours and teaching of an individual founder, who is worshipped as a more or less complete incarnation of the god himself. An organised church or sect of this character under the control or direction of a recognised teacher is known as a *sampradāya*. The older literature bears witness to the highly-privileged position which the *guru* held in ancient India, and the far-reaching if indirect authority and power which he possessed. The entire education of the Indian youth was in the hands of the gurus, and they often occupied a position not unlike that of the private tutor in a European household; except that in place of residing in the homes of their patrons, the boys went to live with them, and remained for years under their entire and masterful control. During this period of association and semi-servitorship a training more or less complete was given in the sacred scriptures. The institution of modern schools and colleges has in large measure deprived the native guru of his authority and position as a teacher; although many Sanskrit schools still exist, in which the ancient lore is studied according to ancient methods and rules. It is not easy to determine how far the spiritual credit and influence

Literatur, Leipzig, 1908, p. 365 ff.; A. A. Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 283 f., 288, 405. See further on possible Christian influences in the Bhagavad-Gītā, G. A. Grierson in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 494, *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 547b, and Dr. Garbe's *Einleitung*, p. 55 ff., *ERE*, ii., p. 538b.

of the guru is maintained under modern conditions; but as a strongly conservative element in the religious life of the country his importance is hardly diminished, and his jurisdiction is scarcely less effective because it is to a large extent unseen and unrecognised.

Founders of Sects

The founders of these sects must in general have been men of very considerable ability with a more than ordinary capacity for impressing their views on their contemporaries. Tradition credits them in most instances with a zeal and success that appear almost phenomenal. They have usually transmitted their authority and sacred character to a line of successors, whose living personality often overshadows that of the founder himself. The power which these men possess over the faith and lives of their disciples is almost unbounded. Their persons are sacred; their word is law, inasmuch as it is regarded as inspired; and they are invested with a divine or semi-divine character, the deity himself in a greater or less degree having taken up his abode within them. It is or was the custom of many of them to make yearly or half-yearly progresses through the districts under their influence, when all the boys of a certain age are presented to them for confirmation.

Confirmation

This practice of a rite of confirmation is a third characteristic possessed in common by all sects or parties of Vaishnavism. All recognise and observe customs of initiation, in which the young Vaishnavite assumes the responsibilities, and is invested with the privileges of full discipleship. The form of initiation sometimes consists merely in the communication

of certain religious sentences or prayers, but is sometimes more elaborate. The age also at which the initiation takes place varies in the different sects; and in some instances different ceremonies are performed at an interval of time.[1]

Sectarian Marks

All Vaishnavites moreover, to whatever denomination they belong, bear sectarian marks on the forehead, the sign and token of their devotion to the god. In the great cities, and among those who have come under the influence of a European education, the wearing of these marks in public has to a large extent been discontinued. The practice is not confined to the worshippers of Vishnu, but is regularly observed by all the more conservative and zealous adherents of the ancient faiths.[2] It is part of the general creed also to avoid as far as possible the taking of life, even of the lowest animal or of an insect.[3] Moreover after death there awaits all in

[1] For details see Monier-Williams, *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*[4], p. 117 ff.

[2] *ERE*, ii. p. 547a; Monier-Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 66 f.

[3] It has often been pointed out that this principle of the Vaishnavite religion has an intimate bearing on the credibility of the stories that have been told of frequent suicides in connection with the car and temple of Jagannāth in Orissa. Men will do strange things in the frenzy of excitement. And among the vast crowds that throng these festivals, fatal accidents must in earlier times have been very frequent; for in spite of all the care of a British trained and officered police they still occur. But self-destruction is absolutely opposed to the convictions and beliefs of the Vaishnavite worshipper, and can never have been intentionally and deliberately compassed. That many have perished in the throng and under the wheels of the car is certain, on the testimony of eye-witnesses. They were not however victims of a desire for death from a religious motive.

requital for their works of merit a place in *Vaikuṇṭha*, the heaven of Vishṇu, or in *Goloka*, the heavenly abode of Krishṇa.

Perhaps the most celebrated and influential of Vaishnavite teachers was *Rāmānuja*, a Brāhman born near Madras at the beginning of the twelfth century.[1] The greater part of his life was spent in the neighbourhood of Conjeeveram,[2] but persecution is said to have driven him into the country of Mysore, where he became the founder of important monasteries.[3] One of the three principal sects or churches of South India, the S'rī Vaishṇavas, traces its origin to Rāmānuja. The others are the S'aiva-Siddhānta, whose doctrines have much in common with Rāmānuja's teaching, and the opposed *advaita* philosophy of S'aṅkarāćārya.[4] Rāmānuja offered an independent and theistic interpretation of the Vedānta sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa, which he elaborated in a formal commentary or *bhāshya*[5]; and his teaching in contrast to that of S'aṅkara, became known as viśishṭādvaita, differentiated or modified *advaita*. He was himself regarded as an incarnation of S'esha, the great primeval serpent, the type of immortality (*ananta*), and selected as especial object of veneration

Rāmānuja

[1] Macdonell, *Sanskr. Lit.*, p. 402 f.; C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India*, p. 145.

[2] *Kāńćīpuram*, 'gold-town,' contains two of the largest Hindu temples in South India dedicated respectively to Vishṇu and S'iva.

[3] Cp. L. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, 1909, p. 207.

[4] *supra*, p. 277.

[5] Translated by G. Thibaut, in *SBE*, vol. xlviii., Oxford, 1904.

the avatāra of Vishṇu in the form of Rāma. He is said to have lived to the age of more than a hundred years, and to have been buried at S'rīraṅgam, near Trichinopoly.

Rāmānuja set himself to oppose the advaita or non-dualistic doctrine which identified all souls with the one Brahman, and denied the reality of the visible universe. According to his teaching the spirits of men have a real existence, and are eternally separate and distinct from the Supreme Spirit. The material universe also is real, having been created by God and from Him; both the visible world and human spirits will eventually be re-absorbed into the Divine Source from which they came forth, although the latter will always preserve a distinct consciousness and continuity of existence. Thus there is as it were a triad of substances, not independent but co-existing, which were known as *Īśvara* or *Parameśvara*, the Supreme Lord; *ćit*, the individual consciousnesses or spirits of men; and *aćit*, the unspiritual matter of the universe. The doctrine of non-duality, *advaita*, was formally preserved by the teaching that the two last principles were not independent of the Supreme, and would ultimately return to the source whence they came. His position however was essentially opposed to the pantheism of the Vedānta, and like the Bhāgavatas, with whom his followers are often reckoned, he taught essentially dependence upon a personal deity and the duty of reverence and obedience to One who is endowed with all the attributes of wisdom and power and infinite grace. In contrast also to the Vedāntist interpretations of S'aṅkara, deliverance is achieved for the individual soul by means

Opposed the extreme Advaita Doctrine

of *bhakti*, not by the solution of the bonds of ignorance.[1]

The followers of Rāmānuja bear in general his name, and are sub-divided into many minor sects, the two chief of which are the *Vadagalais* in the north of India, and the *Teṅgalais* in the south. The latter have their own Veda, written in Tamil, which they regard as older and more authoritative than the Sanskrit text. The two sects are distinguished by a difference in the mode of making the frontal mark, as well as on various points of doctrine. To all Rāmānujas however, Rāma, as the greatest and noblest incarnation of the Supreme, is the chief object of worship. They are numerous throughout India, but their principal temples are in the south.

Teṅgalais and Vadagalais

The Teṅgalais and Vadagalais are the Calvinists and Arminians of India. The former hold what is known as the 'cat' rule or doctrine, *mārjāra-nyāya*, with regard to the relations of the human spirit to the divine. The spirit of man is entirely passive, and can do nothing to forward the work of its own redemption; as the kitten remains helpless and motionless, when carried about by the mother cat. The Vadagalais maintain by preference the *markaṭa-nyāya*, or 'monkey' doctrine, that the human spirit co-operates on its own behalf with the supreme spirit, as the baby monkey clings by its own effort to the coat of its mother. The

[1] On the life and teaching of Rāmānuja see especially G. A. Grierson in *JRAS*, 1903, p. 448 f., and 1907, p. 317 ff., *ERE*, ii. p. 545 f.; cp. Monier-Williams, *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 119 ff.; Hopkins, *Religions of India*, pp. 496 ff., 501. There is a formal exposition of Rāmānuja doctrine in *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*, trans. by Cowell and Gough[2], p. 64 ff.; cp. Max Müller, *Six Systems*, pp. 243 ff., 367; Deussen, *Allg. Gesch.*, i. 3 p. 259 ff.

Teṅgalais also teach that Lakshmī, the wife of Vishṇu, is a created being and finite; the Vadagalais on the contrary regard her as uncreated and infinite. Among the former the shaving of the head of widows is said to be forbidden. Their system of marking the forehead also is more elaborate. Two side lines represent the two feet of Vishṇu, and a central stroke prolonged down the nose is his wife Lakshmī and his lotus throne. The Vadagalais content themselves with a curved line like a U, which is the stamp of only one foot, adding the straight central line for Lakshmī, but omitting the lotus throne.

Rāmānanda

The most important and influential disciple of Rāmānuja was Rāmānanda, who succeeded him at an interval of a century or a century and a half, and through whom the characteristic doctrines of Rāmānuja reached the north of India. He is said to have abandoned or to have been driven from the great monastery at Seringapatam in consequence of a quarrel with the presiding abbot, and taking refuge in the north to have spent the remainder of his life in preaching and promulgating there the doctrines of the sect; both by precept and example enforcing a generous toleration and disregard of distinctions of caste, which admitted to membership high and low alike on equal terms. His followers are known as Rāmānandīs, from the name of the founder, or as Rāmaites or Rāmāvats, as teaching the supreme duty of devotion to Vishnu in his incarnation of Rāma. Rāmānanda's teaching and influence was further and more widely extended through his immediate disciples, the chief of whom, twelve in number, became in their turn founders of orders, some of which rivalled in fame and

influence the original sect. Perhaps the most gifted and remarkable of these was Kabīr,[1] who combined the theistic and humane doctrines of his teachers with elements derived from Muhammadanism, probably also from Christianity, into a mystical and eclectic system, which through his immediate followers and through the Sikh community profoundly modified the religious and political life of North India. A later descendant or follower of Rāmānanda and inheritor of his spirit was Tulasī Dās, the famous Hindī poet (*ob.* 1624 A.D.) ; the lays of whose great epic, the Rāmāyaṇa, are the treasured and popular possession of the Hindī speaking population of North India.[2] In all probability the work of the poet has done more to familiarise the people with the doctrines and teaching of the Rāmānandī school of thought than the actual preaching of the founder and his disciples.[3]

About the same time as Rāmānuja, *Ānandatīrtha*, a Brāhman born at Udipi in the South Kanara District on the coast of South India, enforced again and with even greater emphasis the essential distinctness of the individual soul. It is probably on account of its association with Ānandatīrtha that peculiar sanctity attaches to the place of his

Ānandatīrtha

[1] *infra*, p. 385 ff.

[2] In the judgement of Dr. Grierson the Rāmāyaṇa of Tulasī Dās is ' the one Bible of 100 millions of people.'

[3] On Rāmānanda and his teaching see G. A. Grierson in *JRAS*, 1903 p. 449 f., 1907 p. 320 f., *ERE*, ii. pp. 546a, 548a ; Monier-Williams, *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 147 f. ; Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 502. For Tulasī Dās, see *Linguistic Survey of India*, vol. vi., Calcutta, 1904, p. 12 ff., with the references there given ; *JRAS.*, *ll.cc.* ; R. W. Frazer, *Literary History of India*, London, 1898, p. 365 ff.

birth, and it has become an important centre of pilgrimage. He is said to have been originally a S'aivite, and S'aivite tenets accordingly form a considerable part of the somewhat confused and eclectic system which is known by his name. In his teaching he appears to have asserted the existence of two eternal and separate principles, the soul or spirit of God, and the spirit or spirits of man. These last are unlimited in number, but all of the same kind. The two principles however, although co-eternal, are not co-equal, for the spirit of man is inferior to and dependent on the spirit of God. His followers, divided into minor parties or subsects, call themselves *Mādhvas* after the surname of their founder, and bear on their foreheads a similar mark to that of the Vadagalais. In opposition to the pantheism expounded by S'aṅkara, they have adopted to a large extent the principles of the Sāṅkhya philosophy; and have become known as the deists of India. Their numbers are very considerable in the south of India, but few adherents have been gained in the north. The year of the birth of the founder is uncertain; he is said however to have died 1198 A.D. Rather less than a century later Jayatīrtha, his sixth successor, wrote numerous and important commentaries on his works.[1]

C'aitanya

The two remaining Vaishnavite sects of importance originated in the north of India, and at about the same time, the beginning of the sixteenth century. In both of them stress is laid upon the mystical and devotional rather than the philosophical aspect of faith; and direct appeal is made to feeling and

[1] Monier-Williams, p. 130 ff.; *ERE*, ii. pp. 543, 545 f.; cp. A. B. Keith, *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, p. 11 f.

emotion. Accordingly most of the converts were drawn from the lower classes. *C'aitanya*, the founder of one of the sects, was a Brāhman born at Nadiyā, in Bengal, in or about the year 1485. He claimed to be an incarnation of *Kr*ishṇa, became a *sannyāsin* or ascetic at an early age, and by his enthusiastic preaching of *bhakti*, personal devotion to the god, and especially by his doctrine of the equality of all men without regard to caste, attracted to himself large numbers of disciples. His teaching spread chiefly in Bengal and Orissa, where his followers are numerous at the present time, not only among Hindus, but also among non-caste tribes of animistic tendencies, by whom his name and memory are reverenced as divine. In practice the rules of caste are observed except at the great festivals, at which food offered to the god is distributed and eaten by all in common. Tradition records that C'aitanya himself disappeared or was translated to Vaikuṇṭha without dying at the early age of forty-two or forty-three; and to him, as to his immediate successors, the members of the sect pay divine honours.

In the notices and traditions with regard to C'aitanya there would seem to be clear traces of Christian influence. Thus at his birth wise men are said to have come and offered him worship. After some years spent in travelling and preaching he settled in Katak, near the great temple of Jagannāth; and there, according to the tradition, he saw one day in a vision *Kr*ishna in the sea sporting with the Gopīs, and rushing eagerly in to meet the god was drowned. It is recorded of him that he made much use of sacred processions with music (*saṅkīrtam*) as a means of propagating the faith. His two chief disciples were Advaitānanda and Nityānanda, who with C'aitanya himself are known as *mahāprabhus*, and form a sort of divine or semi-divine triad. After the death of the founder also the community became divided according to the laxity of caste observance, and the freedom with which inter-marriage

was permitted. The corresponding centres of pilgrimage or holy places are S'āntipur in Bengal, about twenty-five miles south-east of Nadiyā, where the descendants of Advaitānanda reside and exercise authority, and Nadiyā itself the home of the descendants of Nityānanda. At the latter place an annual festival is held in the early part of the year, when several thousands of his followers come together to do honour to C'aitanya. Lives of the founder, together with summaries of his teaching, were compiled from narratives given by his immediate disciples, and these form the basis of modern knowledge of the origin and character of the sect.[1]

The second northern sect is that of the *Vallabhāćāryas*, founded by *Vallabha*, a Brāhman born at Vetiyā or Betiyā, in the Champāran District of Bengal, towards the close of the fifteenth century. His family came originally from Southern India, but had settled in the north before the birth of Vallabha. He appears to have been a man of considerable intelligence and force of character, author of commentaries on the Bhagavad-Gītā and of other works; and to have set himself in opposition to the ascetic tendencies and practices which have found so congenial a soil in many parts of India. According to Vallabha's teaching, the child Kṛishṇa is especially to be worshipped by the way of devotion and self-surrender.[2] Human love in all its forms is sacred,

Vallabha

[1] See H. H. Wilson, *Works*, London, 1862–71, vol. i. p. 152 ff.; *ERE*, vol. ii. pp. 492 f., 546, and vol. iii. *s.v.* Chaitanya, with the references there given; Monier-Williams, p. 138 ff.; Hopkins, p. 503 f.; *Indian Census Report*, 1901, p. 404; and *Gazetteer of India*[3], *ss.vv.* Nadiyā and S'āntipur.

[2] An example of the form of vow that is taken is given by Monier-Williams:—'I here dedicate to the holy Kṛishṇa my bodily organs, my life, my inmost soul and its faculties, with my wife, my house, my children, with all the wealth I may acquire here or hereafter, and my own self. O Kṛishṇa, I am thy servant.'—*Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 117; cp. Barth, p. 233 ff.

and is a type of the divine. Naturally this last doctrine was open to misconstruction, and liable to be corrupted; and in later times the followers of Vallabha became the Epicureans of India, and have sunk generally to a very low level of morality.

Philosophically they hold and teach a modified form of non-duality known as *śuddhādvaita*. Brahma is *saguṇa*, possessed of the three attributes *sat, cit, ānanda* (*saććidānanda*).[1] The human soul is temporarily deprived of the attribute of bliss (*ānanda*), but will regain it in union with the Divine. The material world is being (*sat*) alone, and has neither thought nor bliss (*ćit, ānanda*). There are features again in their worship and practice which seem to be reminiscent of Christianity, as for example the festival in which is commemorated the birth of *Kr*ishna in a stable. The daughter of Vallabha is said to have been married to C'aitanya, the leader of the reform movement in Southern Bengal.

The adherents of the sect are to be found mainly in Bombay and on the west coast of India. The lineal descendants of the founder bear the title of Mahārājas, are often men of wealth and influence, and are worshipped as gods, as living incarnations of *Kr*ishṇa himself.[2]

A Vaishnavite sect, which numerically is now of small importance and confined to the north of India, was founded by Nimbārka or Nimbāditya in or about the twelfth century of our era. The adherents of the sect are known as Nimāvats, and worship

Nimāvats

[1] *supra*, p. 275

[2] Monier-Williams, p. 134 ff.; Hopkins, p. 504 ff.; G. A. Grierson, in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 320 f., *ERE*, ii. p. 545.

Krishṇa as the incarnation of the supreme god. Nimbārka himself was believed to be an incarnation of the sun (*arka, āditya*), and taught a doctrine of *dvaitādvaita*, dualistic non-duality, according to which the human soul and the material universe are each distinct from Brahman, but are not self-existent, clinging to or inhering in the Divine as an inseparable attribute in its possessor. The human soul will ultimately become one again with Brahman, united or re-absorbed into the source whence it came forth. A later sub-division of the sect, which originated in the latter half of the sixteenth century, enjoined the worship of Rādhā, the favourite wife of *Krishṇa*, took the name of Rādhā-Vallabhīs, and carried to an extreme the doctrine of mystical love and devotion. Rādhā is the principal character in the *Gītāgovinda*, the well-known and popular poem of Jayadeva,[1] who is said to have been a disciple of Nimbārka.[2]

Nārāyaṇa

A reforming movement was initiated at the beginning of the nineteenth century by *Swāmi-Nārāyaṇa*, a high-caste Brāhman of Oudh, born near Lucknow about the year 1780 A.D. Early in life he took up his residence at Ahmadābād in Gujarāt, and there preached doctrines of self-denial and a lofty morality with so great success that he was persecuted, compelled to leave the city, and subsequently arrested and imprisoned. After his release he gathered round him many followers, who have on the whole maintained his doctrine and discipline to the present day. Their teaching is practically

[1] *Flor. circa* 1100 A.D., according to tradition; see Duff, *Chronology*, p. 136.

[2] Monier-Williams, p 146 f.; G. A. Grierson, in *ERE*, ii. p. 545 f.

identical with that of the Rāmānujas. There are said to be more than a thousand celibate priests, who are known as '*sādhus*,' saints or holy men, and from forty to fifty thousand laity, '*grihasthas*' or householders.[1] Their principal temples and centres of worship are at Ahmadābād itself, and at Wartāl about fifty miles to the south-east, where the leaders of the sect reside. They possess a sacred book, the work of Swāmi-Nārāyaṇa, which is a collection of moral precepts and directions for daily life.[2]

With Vaishnavite sects must also be classed the movement that originated in the Panjāb with the great and high-minded teacher *Kabīr* in the fifteenth century of our era. *Kabīr* was one of the twelve chief disciples of Rāmānanda,[3] and was himself a Musalmān by birth. Early in life however he came under the influence of all that was best in the philosophic and tolerant creed of Hinduism, and especially the semi-mystical teaching of *bhakti*, devotion of heart and life to the Supreme. It is hardly probable that he ever really professed the Vaishnavite faith; but in his teaching he essayed to combine the pure elevated monotheism of Islām with a liberalism and breadth of view that has its nearest parallel perhaps in the Buddhist creed, and according to some authorities was not untouched, though indirectly, by Christian influences. Eclecticism has always found a congenial home on Indian ground. And Kabīr,

Kabīr

[1] *Indian Census Report*, 1901, vol. i. p. 362.

[2] *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 148 ff., where an interesting description is given of a visit to the Mahārāja, the religious chief. See also Hopkins, p. 506.

[3] *supra*, p. 378 f.

while rejecting and strenuously denouncing idolatry and the various superstitions that had been engrafted on the Vaishnavite faith, taught that the essence of all religion was devotion to the one God, to whom Hindu and Muhammadan alike paid homage, though under different names. Withal however he seems never to have entirely escaped from pantheistic tendencies, and in his reported sayings there are found expressions and sentiments which recall the philosophy of the Vedānta. The chief value of his teaching undoubtedly consisted in the high morality which he inculcated.

> No act of devotion can equal truth; no crime is so heinous as falsehood; in the heart where truth abides, there is my abode.
>
> Put a check upon the tongue; speak not much. Associate with the wise. Investigate the words of the teacher.
>
> When the master is blind, what is to become of the scholar? When the blind leads the blind both will fall into the well.
>
> That a drop falls into the ocean all can perceive; but that the drop and the ocean are one, few can comprehend.[1]

The resemblance in form no less than in substance between Kabīr's doctrine of the Word, as reported and taught by his disciples, and the Λόγος teaching of St. John's Gospel is so striking and fundamental that it is hardly possible to maintain their entire independence. The Word (*śabda*) came forth from God in the beginning, who by the Word created all things; but although coming forth from Him, the Word is not distinct from God, but abides ever with Him, etc. Moreover the Kabīr-panthīs, the modern followers of Kabīr's teaching, observe a sacramental ceremony, where bread and water

[1] Quoted with other examples of the traditional sayings of Kabīr in Monier-Williams, *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 160.

are distributed, and this is followed by a common meal or love-feast.[1]

The church or sect which Kabīr thus founded seems never to have won a large number of adherents. The Kabīr-panthīs, however, exist to a considerable extent in scattered communities in the north of India. A few also are to be found in the south. Their religious centre is Benares, to which city they come together at the festivals. Besides his immediate followers, twelve principal sub-sects are said to trace their origin to the example and teaching of Kabīr. The most important next to the Sikhs are the Dādū-panthīs, whose founder, Dādū, was born at Ahmadābād in the middle of the sixteenth century. Their doctrines are theistic, but like those of Kabīr himself are infected with Hindu pantheism. They worship Rāma, but reject the use of idols or temples. A similar sect, perhaps also to be traced back ultimately to the influence of Kabīr, is that of the *Satnāmīs*, who are numerous in the Central and United Provinces of India. Their founder is said to have lived in the middle of the eighteenth century near Lucknow.[2]

The most celebrated disciple of Kabīr was *Nānak*, the founder of the Sikhs or 'disciples' in the Panjāb. Born near Lahore in the year 1469, he inherited the views and principles of his predecessor; but appears to have combined with them a larger

Nānak and the Sikhs

[1] See G. H. Westcott, *Kabīr and the Kabīrpanth*, Cawnpore, 1907; G. A. Grierson, in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 325 f., and *Bible in the World*, 1908, pp. 247 ff., 269 ff.; Monier-Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 158 ff.

[2] For the Kabīr-panthīs, see Westcott, *op. cit.*; Monier-Williams, p. 160; Dādū-panthīs, etc., *ib.*, p. 178 f.; *Ling. Survey*, ix. 2 p. 32. The Provincial Reports of the Indian Census usually contain the most recent and reliable accounts of these minor sects.

measure of the mystical and pantheistic ideas of true Hinduism, and to have laid greater stress on the duty of implicit obedience to the living voice of the *Guru* or teacher. Nānak himself was looked upon as inspired by, or according to the Hindu conception as a manifestation of the deity. The leading doctrines on which his teaching was based were the unity of God and the equality of all men without regard to caste; and he seems to have inculcated a high ideal of morality, and to have claimed from his followers strict purity of life and submissive obedience to God. The traditional *Japji* or hymn of praise, which is ascribed to him, and in which his belief and doctrine are set forth, forms part of the daily worship of the Sikhs :—

There is but one God, whose name is true, the Creator . . .
immortal, unborn, self-existent.
The True One was in the beginning, the True One was in the primal age.
The True One is now also, O Nanak, the True One also shall be.[1]

. . . . . .

By thinking I cannot obtain a conception of Him, even though I think hundreds of thousands of times.
Even though I be silent, and keep my attention firmly fixed on Him, I cannot preserve silence.

. . . . . .

How shall man become true before God ? how shall the veil of falsehood be rent ?
By walking, O Nanak, according to the will of the Commander as pre-ordained.

. . . . . .

He is not established, nor is He created ;
The Pure One existeth by Himself.

. . . . . .

[1] In the judgement of the translator the sentence should rather be rendered,—The True One is, was, and also shall be.

The condition of him who obeyeth God cannot be described ;
Whoever trieth to describe it shall afterward repent.
There is no paper or pen or writer
To describe the condition of him who obeyeth God.
Pure is His name.
Whoever obeyeth God knoweth it in his own mind.[1]

The lineal descendants of Nānak have their home at Dera Baba Nānak, on the Ravi river, north of Amritsar, where a famous temple of the sect is to be found.

Ten chief Gurus : The Ādi-Granth

Nānak further transmitted his authority to a line of successors, nine in number, each of whom was nominated by his predecessor, and to each in turn of whom the same reverence was paid. These, with Nānak, form the ten chief Gurus of the Sikh religion. Their sacred book is the *Ādi-Granth*, or 'First Book,' a collection of the sayings of Kabīr, Nānak, and the first three Gurus, with additions from various sources.[2] The fourth Guru, *Rām-dās*, founded in 1574 Amritsar, the most sacred city of the Sikhs and the head quarters

[1] McAuliffe, *op. cit.*, i. p. 195 ff.

[2] The Ādi-Granth was translated into English for the first time by Dr E. Trumpp, and published in the year 1877. By the Sikhs themselves his work was regarded with disfavour, and they urged that it showed signs of having been executed in a spirit of religious bias, and was unjust to their faith. A new rendering of the Sikh sacred writings, together with lives of their chief Gurus, the whole derived from native sources and submitted to the criticism of native scholars, was published in six volumes at Oxford in 1909 by M. A. McAuliffe, under the title of *The Sikh Religion, its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*. Mr. McAuliffe retired from the Indian Civil Service in order to devote himself to the work of translation and interpretation, and has had the advantage of the help and friendship of the highest authorities and best scholars among the Sikhs themselves.

of their religion.[1] There in the 'Golden Temple' the chief copy of the Granth is preserved, and an almost idolatrous regard is paid to it with music and offerings. The tenth Guru, *Govind*, refused to appoint a successor, declaring that henceforth the Granth was to be the real guru of the people.

By Govind also was effected the transformation of the Sikhs from a body of religious sectarians, of loftier views and more upright practices than their neighbours, and united solely by a common faith and a common reverence for their founder and the Guru as his living representative, into a warlike and fanatical nation, who defended and propagated their faith by the sword. They adopted the name of the Khālsā, the portion or community of God; and their subsequent history belongs rather to the political than to the religious history of India. Those of the community who remained aloof from the political aims of the Khālsā, and refused to adopt their military methods, formed a distinct community of traders and agriculturists, known as Sahijdharis. They profess similar doctrines, but have little part in the religious life of the Sikh nation. There are several sub-divisions,

[1] The temple stands on a platform in the centre of a sacred tank or lake, with the paved side of which it is joined by a single causeway. In the early part of the nineteenth century Ranjit Singh at great expense covered the entire roof with sheets of copper gilt, whence the name of the Golden Temple. In the circular pavilion or hall in which the sacred book lies on a cushion an almost uninterrupted service is maintained during the day, the priest seating himself before the Granth and reading from the sacred books to an accompaniment of hymns and musical instruments. The worshippers pass around in a corridor or cloister, and throw their offerings of small coins into the centre before the sacred book. Cp. *Imperial Gaz. of India*, *s.v.* Amritsar.

among which the Udasins trace their origin to Siri Chand, the eldest son of Nānak.[1]

The Sikhs themselves are divided into numerous sects or castes, differing little in doctrine, among which the Nirmalas and Nihangs are perhaps the most important and influential. In many respects however their practice is with difficulty distinguishable from the ordinary forms of Hinduism, and they are said to be more and more falling back into Hindu usages and idolatry. The impulse of the reforming movement which Kabīr and his successors originated and guided would seem to have long since spent its force. And unless a new and strong impulse to a higher and purer faith should be brought to bear upon them to regenerate the spirit of the people, it would appear almost impossible for them to resist the attractive and absorbent force of the dominant Hinduism that surrounds them on every side.[2]

Sikh Sects

The worship of S'iva also is represented by many sects, and appears under many variant forms in India. It is on the whole however a less popular and influential cult than that of Vishnu, and is losing its hold on the people throughout the country. The name S'iva as that of the supreme god and object

S'aivism : S'iva

[1] McAuliffe, *op. cit.*, i. p. lii. ; J. C. Oman, *Mystics Ascetics and Saints of India*, p. 194 f.

[2] The late Dr. T. L. Pennell wrote with reference to the Sikh community at Dehra in the north-west of the United Provinces :— 'The whole entourage of the Mahant suggested orthodox Hinduism' (*CMSI*, 1905, p. 600).

of worship makes its appearance comparatively late in the literature, not being met with in the Vedic writings; but the germs of the S'aivite form of faith must be sought further back than any historical records that are available, and as a popular system of religion S'aivism is older than Vaishnavism. This is proved in part by the fact that the earliest examples of religious symbols on coins, such as are found on the coins of the Indo-Scythian kings before the beginning of the Christian era, are S'aivite and Buddhist, not Vaishnavite. The distinctive signs or emblems of the rival cult of Vishṇu are entirely absent. The prototype of S'iva in the Rigveda is Rudra, the 'roarer,' a deity of storm and destructive violence, to whom the epithet of *śiva*, 'auspicious,' is euphemistically attached. The character and qualities also that are ascribed to Rudra are similar to those with which S'iva in some of his many aspects is endowed. It is probable therefore that the worship of S'iva represents a primitive and local cult, the original home of which was in the north-west of India, which was early taken over or adopted by the Brāhmans, and on account of the similar characteristics and attributes of the deities was united with that of Rudra, and became prevalent over the greater part of India, perhaps as early as the third century before our era. By Greek and Roman writers S'iva was identified with Herakles.[1]

S'aivism then is that form or variety of Hinduism

[1] Cp. J. Kennedy in *JRAS*, 1907, pp. 966 ff., 972 f., who points out that the period between Alexander the Great and the reigns of the Gupta kings was a time of great religious revolution in India, during which the foundations of modern Hinduism were laid. On S'iva as *Lakulīśa*, 'lord of the club,' see also an art. by J. F. Fleet *ib.* p. 419 ff.

in which the first place as an object of worship is taken by the deity euphemistically termed *S'iva*, the auspicious or fortunate god. It represents the meditative ascetic mysterious aspect of religion and is thus contrasted with the bright and joyous tone of Vaishnavism. S'iva himself is the great patron and ensample of ascetics; and his worship is thus coloured throughout by the dark and dread features of its origin. The increasing prominence of his name and cult in the later literature is perhaps in large measure due to the ascetic tendencies of Indian thought and practice. It may be explained also in part by the fact that he was originally a malevolent deity, a god of storms like his prototype Rudra in the Vedic hymns. As the third member of the Hindu Tri-mūrti, he is the great Destroyer. By his worshippers however he is elevated to a position of superiority to either Brahmā or Vishṇu, and is regarded as combining in his own person, besides the attributes proper to himself, those also of Creator and Preserver. Like Vishṇu, S'iva has his own heaven *Kailāsa*, which is conceived to be in the Himālaya Mountains; and thither he bears his faithful disciples. There he dwells with his wife *Pārvatī* and his sons *Skandha*, the god of war, and *Ganeśa*, the god of wisdom, both of whom are widely known and honoured divinities. Ganeśa in particular, the elephant-headed god, the *Puliyār* of the south of India, the patron of literature and of the arts, is invoked to favour and further all literary endeavour. His image is rarely absent from the village, although few temples seem to be dedicated to him alone, nor is he worshipped exclusively by many followers. As Gaṇapati, 'lord of hosts,' he is the patron divinity of the *Gāṇapatyas*, a small and apparently

dwindling sect. Skandha is the god of war, and his worship is not infrequently associated with that of his brother.

S'iva himself is distinguished by a thousand and eight names, which describe his different attributes; and he is represented with five faces, or with one face bearing three eyes, his body smeared with ashes, and in his hands various instruments of war or revelry, as a trident, a cord, an axe, and a small drum. He rides upon the sacred bull *Nandi*. Not only is he the peculiar god of ascetics, but in another aspect of his being and character of revelry and all manner of self-gratification. Especially he presides over all the acts and processes of nature. In his temples there is often placed a mere stone, sometimes entirely rough, which receives worship as the symbol of the god, and to which offerings are made, usually consisting of water and Bilva leaves. The bull is always and everywhere sacred to S'iva, probably as being the type of reproductive energy; and a stone image of a bull is found in connection with shrines dedicated to his worship.

Relation to Philosophy and Nature Worship

As a religious creed therefore *S'aivism* might perhaps be best described as a combination of ancient free speculation, chiefly dualistic and materialistic, with the lower forms of nature and animal worship, which are to be met with everywhere among primitive and even more advanced peoples; a combination in which the latter element has had a larger share than the former in determining the final shape which the resultant faith and practice should assume. Allied with the Sāṅkhya philosophy, it appears to have commanded widespread popularity and

influence in the early and middle centuries of our era. It has however failed to maintain its ground against the more spiritual faith and creed of Vishnu. And although as a religion still popular with the lower classes, as a philosophy it has little hold on the thought or belief of the people. Thus if Vaishnavism in its better moods represents the more enlightened aspect of Hindu religion, S'aivism on the other hand in many of its forms descends to the lower depths of a debasing and sensual idolatry. And while it is as true in India as elsewhere that many individuals are better than their creed, as a practical rule of life the S'aivite faith has long ceased to be an incentive to right conduct or an inspiration of noble thought.

Most of the great anniversaries and festivals of Hinduism are Vaishnavite in origin, but two at least bear a predominantly S'aivite character. Usually however the religious element in all these festivals has come to take an entirely secondary place, and they are little more than occasions for sport and holiday-making, in which all sects join. The two chief S'aivite celebrations, in the first of which fasting has a recognised place, are the *S'ivarātri* or *Mahāśivarātri*, a fast or festival in honour of S'iva held on the 14th of the dark half of Magha (the middle or end of February), on the day preceding the new moon. The festival, which is continued during the following night, is in commemoration of the god's first manifestation of himself upon earth in the form of the *liṅga*. The latter is therefore worshipped with offerings and prayers, and a vigil with fasting is kept during the sacred night (rātri). The practice of keeping night-long watch is said to be based upon the

S'aivite Festivals: S'ivarātri

legend of a hunter, who passed a night of watching in a tree sacred to S'iva, and by dropping its leaves upon the ground unconsciously paid homage to the great god. He was therefore translated to the heaven of S'iva, together with the animals whose lives he had spared in response to their piteous pleading. Those who follow his example of a night-long service hope to secure a like recognition and reward.

Holī

The second is the riotous spring festival of the Holī, celebrated for the three or four days preceding the full moon of Phālguna (February to March). Bonfires are lit, more or less orderly processions move about the streets, and rose-water or red powder is thrown upon the passers-by with coarse jests; while the lower classes and boys are allowed to use the utmost freedom of abusive language without rebuke. The celebration was originally held in honour of Holī, a female demon, images of whom are burnt by the children in the bonfires. At the present time, however, it is ordinarily associated with Kāma, the god of love, whose destruction was wrought by S'iva for endeavouring to induce him to remit or abandon his austerities. In many parts of India it is observed in conjunction with the *Dolā Yātrā*, or Swing festival, when a temporary swing is erected, upon which an image of Kṛishṇa is rocked to and fro, and the worshippers both of Vishṇu and S'iva take part in the rejoicings.

S'āktism

By the side of S'aivism and not independent of its forms of belief and ritual is the widespread worship of *S'akti*, force or energy. It is probable that the practice of S'akti worship, together with the beliefs and tendencies which it presupposes, was adopted

by the Āryan invaders from the usages of the primitive peoples among whom they found themselves in the early centuries of settlement in India. Among these peoples a great variety of demon and nature cults obtained. And the Āryan conquerors made the customs and modes of worship of the subjected tribes their own, and in this as in many other instances seem to have identified the native religious forms and names with others with which they were already familiar. S′aivism entered into close alliance with S′āktism, and was degraded and enervated in the contact.

Regarded as the power that pervades all nature and maintains it in being, *S′akti* is personified as a goddess, the wife of the god, and the agent or all-powerful intermediary by whom he effects his purposes. Or, as it has been expressed, the god himself may be said to be the efficient cause of all things, *śakti* the instrumental or effecting cause, and the *prakṛiti* the material cause.[1] The power or energy therefore of every god was conceived as in a sense resident in his wife, Sarasvatī for example being the *śakti* of Brahmā, Lakshmī of Vishṇu, and Durgā of S′iva. The worship of the S′akti, however, from the earliest times preserved a more or less entirely distinct form, with temples and a literature of its own. In practice it presented itself as a worship of the female principle in nature, intimately connected with dualistic conceptions of the origin of the universe. Similar tendencies and thoughts are not strange to other branches of Hinduism; but amongst the *S′āktas*, and those especially devoted to this cult these have been most completely developed, and provision has been made for a full organisation and ritual.

[1] Barth p. 199.

Goddess Worship

The central and most important divinity in this form of worship is the wife of Śiva, who as *Devī* or *Mahādevī*, 'the great goddess,' has to a considerable extent usurped the place and functions of her lord, and become the head of a widespread many-sided and altogether disreputable cult, which possesses great influence especially among the lower classes. In her case also, as in so many others, an aboriginal and primitive cult, which has had regard to the apparently malicious powers of nature, has been grafted upon Āryan conceptions, and the native deities received into the circle of Āryan gods and more or less closely identified with the figures of the Āryan pantheon. It is in the temples of Mahādevī that bloody sacrifices have been, and to a certain extent are still offered in India. Human sacrifice, if as a practice it ever existed in the land,[1] existed in connection with or was adopted into her worship. She is the cruel deity who delights in blood, and who, unless she is propitiated and her desires gratified, will bring disease and death on mankind.[2] As *Kālī*, the dark goddess, her name is immortalised in Calcutta, Kālī-kaṭa, Kālī's burning or burying-ground. Mahādevī stands at the head of a variety of female powers, the *Mahāmātris* or 'great mothers,'

[1] I venture to think that this still remains an open question. The passages quoted from the books, so far from regarding the practice as usual and familiar, appear to me to treat it as something altogether legendary and outside the range of their experience,—to be undertaken perhaps at the divine command, but otherwise inadmissible. It does not of course follow that such sacrifices were unknown to the rude and savage religions, whose thoughts and ways have found no record in the sacred literature.

[2] Cp. *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 189 f., and the passages there quoted from the Tantras.

the *Yoginīs* or 'sorceresses,' etc., whose number is unlimited. The 'mother' cult, the worship of the female element in nature and in life, with the oppressive dread of the power and malignity of the demonesses of disease and hurt, is closely associated with S'aivism, and has grown up together with it, and established in many respects a concurrent sway. With the rival Vaishnavite sect it has little in common.

The Mahāmātris are the most important of the goddess divinities. They are usually represented as the wives of the gods, but exercise an independent authority and claim an independent homage. In general they are to be regarded as either benevolent or malignant, corresponding to the two aspects, *Gaurī*, 'white,' and *Kālī*, 'dark' or 'black,' of Mahādevī herself. The former preside over creation reproduction and life, the latter over destruction and death; and the latter are by far the more numerous. To this last class belong the goddesses who bring small-pox and fever, who inflict pain and cause disaster, and whose wrath it is incumbent upon men to avert by sacrifice.

The *S'āktas*, or worshippers of the *S'akti*, are adherents of two principal sects, with various sub-divisions scarcely to be distinguished except by the members themselves. These are the followers of the right-hand, the (1) *Dakshinamārgīs* or *Dakshināćāryas*, who carry out in general the rules and public ceremonies of Hinduism, but add to them animal sacrifice in honour of Kālī or some other form of the great goddess; and the (2) *Vāmamārgīs* or *Vāmāćāryas*, the followers of the left-hand, who practise all manner of secret observances and magic, in order to secure for themselves supernatural powers. The former, the adherents

Sects

of the right-hand, are numerous and widely spread throughout India. The latter are believed to be scarcely inferior in number. It is however almost impossible to arrive at an accurate estimate of their diffusion and influence. For except in rare cases no one will openly avow himself an adherent of the left-hand with its mysterious rites of sorcery and sensual indulgence.

Very numerous also in the south of India is the S'ākta sect, known as *Liṅgavats* or *Liṅgāyits*, from their worship of the *liṅga*, or phallus.

Liṅgāyits

Their founder is said to have been a Brāhman named Basava, who lived in the Dekhan about the beginning of the twelfth century. He gained for himself a large following by preaching against caste, the pretensions of the Brāhmans, and the entire order and ritual of the orthodox religions. The *Jaṅgamas*, or 'itinerant' monks, who penetrate to the farthest parts of India, belong to this sect. Mingled with their active repudiation of distinctively Hindu practices, and with ideas that appear to us sensual and degrading, there is a spirit of mysticism and devotion that has found expression in hymns that have gained considerable popularity. The members of the sect bear upon their neck a cord on which is hung a small silver or metal box containing the liṅga symbol. They also bury instead of burning their dead. But in other respects, especially in the observance of caste distinctions, they are said to be largely returning to the customs and habits of ordinary Hindus.

It must however be borne in mind that these elaborate and as it were scientific systems of religion have by no means penetrated to the lowest strata of the life of India, or are in any degree co-extensive with all that bears the name of Hinduism. They

are largely confined to the upper and intellectual portion of the population, a small minority, constituting perhaps one-tenth of the whole. The vast majority of the people of India are the unlettered inhabitants of the villages.[1] And no survey of Indian religious thought can justly lay claim to completeness which fails to take account of village habits and beliefs. The agricultural inhabitants of the villages, low-caste and non-caste, for the most part know nothing and care nothing for philosophic theories or systems of religious doctrine. Their religion is summed up in the desire to propitiate malevolent deities who might wish to do them harm, and to extort gifts and benefits from divinities whose disposition is neutral or disposed to bless. Nor is it less true in India than in other countries where similar beliefs hold sway that the malicious and hurtful deities receive by far the largest amount of attention. Hence the worship of the great majority of the people of India may be rightly described as demonolatry. Life on its religious side is in their case a prolonged attempt to avert

Popular Beliefs: Demonolatry

[1] In the Indian census of 1891 there were enumerated 227 towns with a population of 20,000 and upwards, containing 4.84 per cent. of the entire population of the country; as compared with 182 towns and 53 per cent. in England. The difference is very striking. Altogether 2,035 places were returned in the census as 'towns,' including a considerable number where the population was less than 5,000. But the total for all these was only 9.48 of the whole. See J. A. Baines, *General Report of the Census of India*, 1891, p. 42 ff. The movement citywards and away from the country, so noticeable among the crowded populations of Europe, hardly exists in India. It is probable that with the growth of manufacturing interests the movement will become accentuated. And a series of new and most difficult problems, religious economic and political, will arise.

the anger of evil spirits. Of this class Monier Williams writes that from birth to death they are 'victims of a form of disease which is best expressed by the term *demonophobia*. They are haunted and oppressed by a perpetual dread of demons. They are firmly convinced that evil spirits of all kinds, from malignant fiends to merely mischievous imps and elves, are ever on the watch to harm harass and torment them, to cause plague sickness famine and disaster, to impede injure and mar every good work.'[1] In some villages in the south of India no hut is permitted to have its door facing towards the south, lest it should facilitate the entrance of a demon. Every tree, every rock, every stream, the very winds themselves, have their appropriate devil; whose designs are or may be fraught with the utmost danger to health and life, and must if possible be diverted by propitiatory offerings. Moreover every village has its own tutelary deities, who watch over it and the fields of the peasants. Every house has its household gods. And the ill-omened ranks are being continually recruited by men and women who, if they have been in any way remarkable during life, are after death apt to become unquiet ghosts to the disturbance of their former neighbours. Nor is this worship confined to the dead. It is extended also to the living. The lower classes have for centuries been instructed that they must from a distance pay reverence to the Brāhman as to a superior being of a higher order and semi-divine. The lesson was learnt, and put into habitual practice. And the same men readily offer a similar homage to any placed in authority

[1] *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*[4], p. 210 f.; it is probable that both the extent of the alarm felt, and its depressing influence upon the daily life, have been exaggerated by European observers.

over them, especially if they are the representatives of a power experienced by its effects on their lives, but unseen and mysterious.[1]

Popular Deities

To enumerate these various divine and superhuman beings, who are active for evil or for good, would be impossible. They are countless in number, and of infinite variety of rank, capacity, and character, ranging from deities whose claims and dignity are almost equal to those of the great gods to inferior spirits whose persons and privileges are little if at all superior to those of men, but who are untrammelled by limitations of time and space. One of the most popular of these demigods is *Hanumān*, the monkey-god, the ally of Rāma in his assault on the kingdom of Rāvaṇa; he is the leader and lord of the monkey tribes. In the North *Bhairava*, or *Bhairon*, the 'terrible,' is an impersonation of S'iva, whose form and worship are worthy of his name. To him a certain class of Yogins, or ascetics, especially devote themselves, and chant hymns in his praise. S'iva's wife also, Devī, appears as *Bhairavī*. Another supposed incarnation of the same god is *Khaṇḍobā* or *Khaṇḍoji*,[2] widely

[1] Perhaps this worship does not always mean so much as to the European it appears to do. During the reign of the late Queen Victoria in many homes in India adoration was regularly paid to her as Empress of India, and her picture was habitually worshipped. At the time of the Jubilee celebrations of 1887 a statue of the Queen was erected in one of the public thoroughfares of Madras, and not a few natives were reported to have been seen 'doing *pūjā*,' or performing worship before it. Parallel instances might readily be quoted from almost every town and village in India.

[2] The name is usually derived from *khaṇḍa*, a sword or dagger. Whence the *devadāsīs*, the 'servants of the god,' are symbolically married to a dagger.

reverenced among the Marāṭhās, and usually represented on horseback with a dog at his side; whose worship is infamous from the custom, still prevalent, of marrying young girls to the god, and so giving them over to a life of shame. The elephant-headed deity *Ganeśa*, the lord of good-fortune and of learning, is everywhere honoured. While of the tutelary divinities of the villages of the South perhaps the best known is *Aiyanār*, who goes by the name of 'father Aiyanār,' and is said to have been the son both of Vishṇu and of S'iva. For his use the villagers place models of horses in clay or terra-cotta in their fields, that mounted upon them he and his followers may chase away the evil demons from the crops.[1]

Animal Worship

Of the numerous members of the animal world there are few, if any, that are not made in some part of India the objects of religious worship. Some of these, as for example the bull, the monkey, or the cobra, command an almost universal reverence. Among a people who recognise the sanctity of life under any shape, and who believe and teach a doctrine of transmigration which comprehends the whole range of existence from the highest form of animal life down to creatures that occupy the lowest place in the scale of being, it is natural that a scrupulous regard should be paid to every manifestation or degree of life, a regard which is often clothed in

[1] Cp. for the north of India W. Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folk-Lore of Northern India*, new edition, London, 1896; two most interesting volumes, stored with curious information. For the south the works quoted of Professor Monier-Williams; E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, 7 vols., Madras, 1909, and *id. Ethnographic Notes*, Madras, 1906; *ERE*, vol. i. *s.v.* Aiyanar, etc.

the outward forms of worship, and as far as can be judged is instinct with its true spirit. The motives which prompt the particular worship, and direct the choice of the object of a local or tribal cult, are various. Animals that minister to the well-being or service of man are in some instances at least worshipped because of their usefulness to their masters. Those on the other hand that are cruel or malicious are propitiated to induce them to refrain from doing harm. Many animals possess a sacred character by virtue of their relation to one or other of the great gods; thus the goose is sacred to Brahmā, the eagle and monkey and serpent to Vishṇu, the bull to S'iva, the tiger to Durgā the dread wife of S'iva, the rat to Ganeśa, the parrot to Kāmadeva or the god of love. Horses, crows, cats, and crocodiles are all credited with a more or less superhuman or divine character in various parts of India, and religious rites are observed in their honour.[1] In connection with some of these, especially the serpent tribe, an elaborate mythology exists.

Worship of Plants, Streams, etc.

Certain species of trees or plants, moreover, are especially sacred, and before them homage is regularly offered. Here also the belief in transmigration, with its wide and indefinite possibilities of re-birth in the vegetable world or even in inanimate and material things, contributed to determine the attitude of reverential awe which the worshipper adopted towards the living or natural agencies by which he found himself surrounded. The most complete deification was

[1] It should be remembered that with the spread of education and Western thought all such observances tend to disappear, and are indeed practically extinct in many districts of India.

that of the Soma, the intoxicating plant of the Veda, but the same sacred character was and is attributed to many even of the commonest products of the soil. The *Tulasī* or *Tulsi* plant, the holy Basil, is believed to be possessed either by Lakshmī or Sītā, and a specimen of it may be found growing in the court-yard of most Indian houses. The women of the household pass daily round the Tulasī plant, and before it make their prayers with offerings of rice and flowers. Often they know and perform no other worship than this. The Pīpal tree, *Ficus Religiosa*, is peculiarly sacred, and no Hindu, it is asserted, will tell a lie under its branches. The banyan, the mango, and the wood-apple all share to a greater or less extent in this divine or semi-divine character. A species of grass, the *Kuśa* grass, and the sacred lotus are both symbolical of extreme sanctity, although worship may not actually be paid to them. Fire is regarded as holy, not only by the Brāhmans and Parsīs, but by many also of the wild and uncivilised tribes. All running water is holy; especially the water of certain rivers, as the Ganges, the Narbada, the Indus, and the Godaveri. To wash in the Ganges is a certain means of purification from all sin. To die on its banks is to go straight to the heaven of the gods. And water from the Ganges is carried all over India for the benefit of those who cannot themselves visit the stream. The sun, moon, planets, and all the heavenly bodies receive constant worship. And thus the list of objects to be reverenced or that are reverenced in some parts of the country might be prolonged to any extent. Mountains rocks and stones, the tools which a man uses in his trade, the fire that warms him, the books out of which the schoolboy learns his lessons, the pots with which

the wife cooks the dinner, all have a part in this strange and elaborate deification, and become the objects of a worship that is by no means confined to the lowest and most ignorant strata of the population. The rites also in which this multifarious worship finds expression are as various as are the demons or deities to whom it is addressed. The extension of Western culture and education is of course doing much, especially in the centres of population, to weaken the hold of these and similar customs. It will, however, be a long time before they altogether vanish before the advance of science and in the light of truth.

Hindu Religiousness

In the presence then of this multiplicity of gods or superhuman powers, the life of the ordinary Hindu might be expected to be greatly taken up with endeavours to satisfy the claims of his many deities by means of offerings and religious ceremonies. And this is more or less true of all classes of society. The time and attention of the orthodox Hindu is to a large extent pre-occupied with a constant round of religious observances, performed either by himself or vicariously through a Brāhman, in order to meet his obligations to one or other of these gods, or to avert the consequences of the wrath of some demon. Not the simplest act of life, a rising up or a lying down, much less a great event such as a birth marriage or death, a festival anniversary or holy-day, may pass, strictly speaking, without the discharge of its appropriate rite of worship or purification. Undoubtedly to those who have come much under Western influences the stringency of this religious discipline is in practice greatly relaxed; although such men often remain true Hindus in name and external form.

As compared however with the mass of the population they are still, and are likely to remain for a considerable length of time, the comparatively rare exceptions. The ascendancy of the Brāhman and of his rules for life and conduct may be breaking down under the solvent forces of education, civilisation, and Christianity. The process is undergoing acceleration, but it is yet far from complete, and its strongest weapon, social ostracism, is hardly touched.

Ācāra

For the Hindu also all the concerns of daily life, great and small, are regulated by *āćāra*, custom, which is only another name for religious observance handed down from his forefathers, to disregard or neglect which is to break caste, with all its tremendous consequences of proscription and persecution. He is by nature very religious and patient of detail; and finds a satisfaction in the forms and minutiae decreed by tradition, which to the impatient onlooker from the West is often hardly intelligible. To him nothing is secular, in the sense that it is unshared in by the supernatural powers. When it is remembered further that according to the accepted faith which he has learned to cherish from his forefathers for many generations it is to him an ever-present and very real possibility that the animal or insect he meets, even the blade of grass at his feet, may be the outward form in which dwells the spirit of his deceased ancestor; that there is no hard and fast line or insurmountable barrier between gods and demons, between demons and men, between men and animals, between animals and plants, but that the same individual soul may inhabit the body now of a man, now of an animal, or again may live as a demon, a god, or a mere vegetable,—wonder ceases at the reverence with which the Hindus

regard every form and manifestation of life, or the vivid imagination with which they people with spirits every nook corner and cranny of the universe, visible and invisible. It would be very far from just, of course, to say that to every Hindu religion is simply a matter of outward observance and ceremony. The reform movements that have sprung up from within and have achieved a wide if temporary success, bear witness to the contrary. Of the majority of the people however it is true that religion has little to do with the heart or the spiritual life. With the lower classes at least it is not a question of the intelligent acceptance of well-understood formulae or creeds. Their faith is expressed in a round of mere external performances, unrivalled in any country for their minute and exacting character, in the regular and precise execution of which consists the whole duty of man.

Failure of Reform Movements

On a review therefore of the whole course of Indian religious history it has been seen to be marked by constant efforts at reform, which have derived their inspiration now from within and now from without. There has been degeneracy and a continual downgrade movement, interrupted by spasmodic revivals more or less influential and far-reaching. The earliest of these, of which we have any knowledge, has found expression in the older and purer of the Upanishads, in a genuine and thoughtful attempt to penetrate behind and above the crude nature worship of the Vedic hymns or the dead formalism of the Brahmanic ritual and to reach a more philosophic soul-satisfying creed. Buddhism in its turn, impelled largely by the upanishad spirit, represented the feeling of weariness with the lifeless ceremonies of Brāhmanism, of revolt

against its priestly arrogance, and of distrust of speculations which tended more and more to reduce man to ineffectiveness, to mere passive acquiescence in a Power that he had no choice but to obey. The reform or compromise again out of which Vaishnavism and the other sectarian and theistic religions arose gave expression to the protest of the human heart against creeds and material systems which left no place for personal communion with a living god; and their founders and successive teachers or regenerators sought to direct their fellow countrymen back from the degenerate practices of idol worship to a supposed primitive and more excellent faith. Lastly came the reform movement that led to the formation of the Sikh nation in the north-west of India and the Panjāb, which presents itself as in many respects the most striking instance of the law of revolt and recoil, which seems to have beset the Hindu peoples with fatal persistency. Here however the initial impulse came from without. Kabīr and his successors endeavoured to combine the strict monotheism of Islām and its abhorrence of idolatry with whatever was best or most deeply rooted in the creed and affections of the Hindu. In each case the reforming movement has appeared to run its course, gradually to exhaust itself and die away, leaving the great mass of orthodox belief and observance comparatively untouched, and the fabric of Brāhmanism, at least in externals, in no degree less powerful and imposing. Buddhism and the religions of Vishṇu and S'iva can hardly be said to form real exceptions. Undoubtedly Brāhmanism has received from Buddhism, to which it so largely gave; but Buddhism has disappeared from India, leaving its rival in possession of the field. Vaishnavism and S'aivism again have been adopted into,

and form outwardly the larger part of the religious system that represents ancient Brāhmanism. That system however as it exists to-day does not depend for its support and continued life on any of these. Notwithstanding all the profound modifications of thought and practice through which it has passed, the substance of modern Hinduism, that which holds the fabric together, its strength and stay, is not belief in Vishṇu or S'iva or any other personal divinity, but the customs and laws which have been formulated by Brāhmanic authority and handed down from Brāhman ancestors.

MODERN RELIGIOUS REFORM

THERE have been in India a considerable number of minor movements of a more limited range and influence, which it is unnecessary here to trace. In no country has the play of religious thought been less restrained, or its expression more varied. The most recent attempt at reform from within, in the direction of the establishment of a pure theistic worship, originated early in the nineteenth century; and of this great hopes were entertained at one time by many who believed that the Indian peoples could and would work out their own spiritual regeneration in their own way. The founder of the movement was Rāmmohan Roy, a Brāhman born in the year 1774 at Rādhā-nagar, in the district of Murshidābād, in Bengal.[1] And as Kabīr had

[1] The date and name of the village are given by Monier Williams, *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 478. Others place his birth two years earlier, and in the district of Bardwān, further south; see Barth. p. 291.

attempted to form an eclectic creed by a combination and selection of the best elements of Muhammadanism and Hinduism, so Rāmmohan Roy aimed at setting up a widely comprehensive system which, on the professed basis of a primitive and expurgated Brāhmanism, essayed to unite in a common creed and practice Hindu and Christian beliefs and modes of worship. Neither by Rāmmohan Roy nor by his successors was their indebtedness to Christianity and to Christian books ever denied, or the influence of Christian teaching on their lives and creed depreciated; but they decisively repudiated the name, and formally rejected many of the distinctively Christian doctrines.

Rāmmohan Roy

The history of the man who established and gave direction to the new movement may be briefly summarised. His life is illustrative of a spiritual and mental eagerness and unrest not at all uncommon in the country of his birth. Brought up as a Vaishnavite he studied when quite a lad Muhammadan books and especially the Qur'ān, with a view probably in the main to worldly advancement. At the age of sixteen he wrote a pamphlet against idolatry, and in consequence of the hostile feeling aroused was compelled for a time to leave his father's house. Some years were spent in travel in India and Tibet, making inquiry into the different systems of religion, and acquainting himself with Arabic, Persian, Pāli, and even Greek and Hebrew, in order that he might be able to read the various sacred books in their original languages. To these after a time he added English; and entered into the service of the Government, acting as Dīwān in several districts of Bengal. During all this period he was engaged in religious controversy,

publishing treatises against what he regarded as the errors of Hinduism, and translations into the vernacular of the Upanishads and other Sanskrit works. The position which Rāmmohan Roy then adopted, and which he consistently maintained to the end, was the one so familiar since his day, that the superstitions and idolatrous practices of Hinduism are a later accretion; that all therefore that is necessary for the renovation and purification of the Hindu faith is to return to the teaching of the earlier sacred books and especially the Upanishads; and that these, if rightly interpreted, will be found to inculcate, so he asserted, a pure and strict monotheism.

In or about the year 1814 having removed to Calcutta, Rāmmohan Roy established there with the help of other native gentlemen like-minded with himself an association for the promotion of spiritual religion. Meetings were regularly held, at which passages from the Vedas were read, hymns were sung, and addresses delivered. A few years later, in the beginning of 1830, the first building set apart for this new worship was opened in Calcutta. This was the earliest theistic church of India, and it has been the parent of many others, scattered here and there in the great towns to which the movement has spread. Rāmmohan Roy gave to his society the name of *Brāhma-Sabhā*, or *Brāhma-Samāj*,[1] the company of believers in Brahma or God; and by the latter title it has become generally known. He thus employed the ancient Hindu or Vedic term to designate the one God, whom he regarded as the true and only object of

Founding of Brāhma-Samāj

[1] *Brāhma-Samāj* is Sanskrit. The usual Bengali form is *Brāhmo-Samāj*, or *Somāj*.

faith; and claimed to have initiated or established a pure monotheistic worship, in which Hindus, Muhammadans, Christians, Buddhists, Jews, or any other race or creed might join on the simple basis of belief in the one supreme God. Before the year closed he left India for England on a mission from the ex-Emperor of Delhi. On his arrival he was presented at the court of King William the Fourth, and remained in the country during all the Reform agitation of 1831–32, in which he took a deep interest. The following year he visited Paris, and returned in the autumn to Bristol. There he was taken ill with fever and died on September 27th, 1833. His body was buried with all due Brāhmanical rites in a private garden, but was subsequently removed to the Arno's Vale cemetery, where a tombstone stands to his memory.

Relation to Christianity

It has often been asserted that Rāmmohan Roy was in reality a Christian. Undoubtedly it is true that he believed the moral teaching of the New Testament to be far superior to that found in any other sacred book; that he associated much with Christian missionaries, and was always ready to aid them in their work; that he denounced caste, though never himself ceasing to observe its rules and restrictions; and that he abandoned much that is usually regarded as distinctive of Hinduism. On the other hand, many of the essential and characteristic doctrines of Christianity he refused to accept. Of the doctrine of the Trinity he declared that it was equivalent to polytheism; and a belief in the divinity of Christ was with equal decision rejected. With all his enlightened views and the experience which his sojourn in England afforded he never entirely broke with the old faith, wore to the last

the thread of the twice-born, and remained a true if reformed Brāhman. His deep sincerity however and the fervour of his religious spirit were unquestionable, and he holds a high position among the great and good whom India has sent forth in the long course of her history, whether regard be had to the powers of his mind or the sincerity of his heart.

The successor of Rāmmohan Roy in the leadership of the theistic church was a Brāhman, Debendra Nāth Tāgore, a man of a liberal spirit, but as strongly attached as his predecessor to the name and forms of ancient Brāhmanism. He became a member of the Brāhma-Samāj in 1841, and two years later originated and edited the first newspaper published in its interests, *The Tattvabodhinī Patrikā*. In 1844 he founded the so-called Vedic ' school, the object of which was to train young men as missionaries for the dissemination of the doctrines of the Brāhma-Samāj, which became the pattern and parent of similar institutions established at a later period. He drew up also a theistic creed or declaration, the *Brāhma Covenant*, by which every member of the church was expected to bind himself, avowing his intention to worship only one God with reverence and love, to shun all sin, especially the sin of idolatry, to observe vows of abstinence, and to do good works. A few years later (1850) he published the Brāhma Dharma, a selection of passages from the Upanishads and other Hindu sacred books, together with a doctrinal summary and exposition, for use in the public services of the Samāj. His most noteworthy concession however to the newer and more progressive spirit of many of his followers was the surrender of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas; their

Debendra Nāth Tāgore

teaching was to be interpreted in the light of reason and of theistic principles, and wherein found to be out of harmony with these to be rejected. In other respects he remained strongly conservative in belief, and represented in his life and character the best form of ancient Hindu creed and practice. He was a man of very considerable intellectual capacity, and deeply religious in feeling. As leader and president of the Samāj, however, his attention was directed mainly to the organisation and consolidation of the new society; and he endeavoured, while providing for the future, to break as little as possible with the past.

Keshab Chandar Sen

Meanwhile there was growing up within the church itself a spirit of unrest, and of dissatisfaction with the cautious and conservative tendencies of the leaders and older men. In the new party which desired more radical changes in faith and worship the most influential representative of advanced views was Keshab Chandar Sen, a member of the *Vaidya* or medical caste, who had joined the theistic church in 1858 at the early age of twenty. In his eyes the reforms already carried out appeared partial and incomplete. For some years however he worked in the closest accord and friendship with Debendra Nāth Tāgore, and the latter ordained him to the office of *āchārya*, 'teacher' or priest, the first non-Brāhman to receive appointment to this the highest position in the church. He established also the 'Indian Mirror,' the official English organ of the Brāhma-Samāj, and commenced the publication of a new vernacular paper, the *Dharma Tattva*, or 'Truth of Religion.'

It was the rule that *āchāryas* should not wear the sacred Brāhmanical thread in the discharge of their

official functions in the church. Its use was permitted however to the subordinate officials and teachers. On this point controversy arose. And Keshab Chandar Sen and those who sympathized with him urged upon Debendra Nāth the duty and necessity of breaking with all Hindu usages, and especially the abolition of caste distinctions, of ancestor worship and other practices which had never by the older members been entirely abandoned, and the complete disuse of the sacred thread. The zeal and ability of Keshab Chandar Sen speedily won for him an acknowledged leadership among the younger adherents of the church; and in 1865 he and his followers seceded, and towards the close of the following year established a new society called the *Brāhma-Samāj* of India, the members of which professed to have entirely surrendered Brāhmanism and Brāhmanical observances. It was initiated by a striking and significant religious service, in which the broad and eclectic spirit of the new church was emphasized by the reading of passages from the sacred books of no less than five distinct faiths, viz. Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Muhammadanism, and Christianity. Following the example also of his predecessor and friend Debendra Nāth Tāgore, Keshab published a selection of texts from these books for use in the church services. He himself was appointed secretary to the new movement; and used all his influence to carry forward the missionary propaganda which Debendra Nāth had begun. Branches of the Samāj were established in some of the provincial cities, and the work met with considerable success.

The original church adopted the name of the *Ādi Brāhma-Samāj*, 'First' or 'Original Brāhma-Samāj'; and sought to maintain a position of compromise,

holding a less definitely eclectic creed and retaining many of the distinctive practices of Hinduism. The new Samāj was more independent of traditions and old associations than that from which it seceded, and more profoundly influenced by the spirit and ethics of Christianity. Keshab himself, as his actions and writings prove, was of a deeply religious character, with a vein of mysticism. He laid great stress on the duty and privilege of prayer, and of *bhakti*, faith and affectionate devotion towards God. Nor did he ever attempt to conceal his enthusiastic admiration for Jesus Christ as a man, or the obligation under which he lay to the moral teaching of the New Testament. In this respect his followers have been true to his example. Like his predecessor Rāmmohan Roy, however, he refused to go further in the acceptance of Christian doctrine, denying for example the divinity of Christ, and while he freely used Christian terms interpreting them always in an Indian and almost pantheistic sense. The earliest confession of faith drawn up by him for the use of the members of the Brāhma-Samāj includes belief in one God, as Creator Preserver and Lord of all, who is infinite in power and wisdom; in the immortality of the soul; and in the equality and brotherhood of all men. It expressly rejects the Hindu doctrine of transmigration, prescribes certain duties to be performed, and urges the pursuit of holiness of life :—

> God Himself never becomes man by putting on a human body. His divinity dwells in every man, and is displayed more vividly in some; as in Moses, Jesus Christ, Muhammad, Nānak, C'aitanya, and other great Teachers, who appeared at special times, and conferred vast benefits on the world. They are entitled to universal gratitude and love.
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> . . . . . .

Duties are of four kinds: (1) Duties *towards God*—such as belief in Him, love, worship, and service; (2) Duties *towards self*—such as preservation of bodily health, acquisition of knowledge, sanctification of soul; (3) Duties *towards others*—such as veracity, justice, gratitude, the promotion of the welfare of all mankind; (4) Duties *towards animals* and inferior creatures—such as kind treatment.[1]

The new church or *Mandir* in Calcutta was opened in the summer of 1868, and during the following year Keshab Chandar Sen paid a visit to England. There he was received by the late Queen Victoria, spoke at various large meetings in London and the provinces, and preached in Unitarian and other Nonconformist places of worship. The numerous sects into which the Christian world appeared to be divided caused him perplexity. He regarded them as presenting each some aspect of the Christ. But nowhere did he find 'the genuine and full Christ as He was and as He is'—

When the Roman Catholic, the Protestant, the Unitarian, the Trinitarian, the Broad Church, the Low Church, the High Church, all come round me, and offer me their respective Christs, I desire to say to one and all,—'Think you that I have no Christ within me? Though an Indian, I can still humbly say, Thank God that I have my Christ.'[2]

Some of his last public words before leaving England well describe his attitude to Christianity:—

The result of my visit to England is that, as I came here an Indian, I go back a confirmed Indian. I came here a Theist, I return a confirmed Theist. I have not accepted a single new doctrine that God had not put into my mind before; I have not accepted new dogmas and doctrines, but I have tried as far as possible to imbibe the blessed influence of Christian lives.[3]

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[1] Monier-Williams, *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], pp. 503–504, where the complete creed is given.

[2] *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 506.

[3] *Religious Reform*, p. 33.

After his return to India in 1870 his energies were devoted to the service of the Brāhma-Samāj, to the promotion of measures of social reform, and to the propagation of the theistic faith. In connection with this work he was accustomed to deliver annual public addresses or manifestoes, in which much that was personal was mingled with expositions of doctrine and earnest appeals on behalf of purity and truth. In the most famous of these, spoken in the Town Hall, Calcutta, in the spring of 1879, before a great audience which included Europeans as well as native Indians, he announced as his subject,—'India asks, Who is Christ?' and after declaring 'I am not a Christian' proceeded to call upon his hearers to accept Christ as the true Asiatic Saint, the greatest Yogin that the world had known, and avowed his belief that Christianity was destined to be the future religion of India:—

> Behold Christ cometh to us as an Asiatic in race, as a Hindu in faith, as a kinsman and a brother, and He demands your heart's affection. The devout Christ, like your Yogis and Rishis, lived a life of sweet devotion, and loved to dwell always in the Supreme Spirit. In accepting Him you accept the spirit of a devout Yogi and a loving Bhakta,—the fulfilment of your national scriptures and prophets.
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> . . . . . .
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> Gentlemen, you cannot deny that your hearts have been touched, conquered, and subjugated by a higher power. That power, need I tell you? is Christ. It is Christ who rules British India, and not the British Government. England has sent out a tremendous moral force in the life and character of that mighty prophet to conquer and hold this vast empire. None but Jesus, none but Jesus, none but Jesus ever deserved this bright, this precious diadem India, and Jesus shall have it.[1]

[1] *Rel. Reform*, p. 39; *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], p. 516.

A further and last illustration of Keshab Chandar Sen's indebtedness to Christian inspiration and Christian books may be given from a confession of faith, which as 'apostle of the Church of the New Dispensation' he issued a few years later, in 1883. The source and model from which were derived both thought and language it is not difficult to recognise :—

Keshab Chandar Sen, a servant of God, called to be an apostle of the Church of the New Dispensation, which is in the holy city of Calcutta, the metropolis of Āryāvarta,

To all the great nations of the world, and to the chief religious sects in the East and the West,

To the followers of Moses, of Jesus, of Buddha, of Confucius, of Zoroaster, of Mahomet, of Nānak, and the various branches of the Hindu Church,

Grace be to you, and peace everlasting.

Whereas sectarian discord and strife, schisms and enmities prevail in our Father's family, causing much bitterness and unhappiness, impurity and unrighteousness, and even war, carnage, and bloodshed,

. . . . . .

It has pleased the Holy God to send unto the world a message of peace and love, of harmony and reconciliation.

This New Dispensation hath He in boundless mercy vouchsafed to us in the East, and we have been commanded to bear witness unto it among the nations of the earth.

Thus said the Lord,—Sectarianism is an abomination unto Me, and unbrotherliness I will not tolerate.

I desire love and unity, and My children shall be of one heart, even as I am one.

At sundry times have I spoken through My prophets, and through My many and various dispensations; there is unity in them.

. . . . . .

Blessed are the peace-makers, who reconcile differences and establish peace, good-will, and brotherhood in the name of the Father.

These words hath the Lord our God spoken unto us, and

His new Gospel He hath revealed unto us,—a gospel of exceeding joy.

And these blessed tidings the Loving Father hath charged me and my brother apostles to declare unto all the nations of the world, that being of one blood they may also be of one faith and rejoice in one Lord.

Gather ye the wisdom of the East and the West, and accept and assimilate the examples of the saints of all ages.

Above all, love one another, and merge all differences in universal brotherhood.

Let Asia, Europe, Africa, and America with divers instruments praise the New Dispensation, and sing the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.[1]

Controversy and Secession

Other social and philanthropic institutions founded by Keshab Chandar Sen included a Training College for missionary students in Calcutta, an Industrial Home for boys, and a Normal School for girls. His active exertions on behalf of the Church were unwearying, and he never ceased to endeavour both by precept and example to promote spirituality and self-denying zeal among its members. Opposition however to his control took form soon after his return from England, and increased, being mainly due to claims which he was understood to make to personal inspiration and authority, and to a divergence of opinion between himself and many of his adherents on the question of the position and rights of woman. In regard to this last subject Keshab maintained a less advanced view than those who differed from him. The immediate cause however of the schism that ensued was his action in betrothing his daughter who was under age to the late Mahārāja of Kuch Behar, and allowing the marriage to be consummated with Hindu rites and

[1] Quoted by Monier Williams from the 'Times of India,' for Jan. 12th, 1883; see *Brāhm. and Hind.*[4], pp. 517–518.

ceremonies. There can be little doubt that Keshab himself was deceived in the matter, allowing himself to believe that the betrothal was preliminary only, and would not proceed to an immediate marriage carried out under Hindu rules and conditions; and that he felt keen remorse for the step he had taken.[1] The consequences were disastrous to the unity and peace of the church. A large number of members seceded, and formed the Sādhāraṇa-Samāj, with officers and a committee of control, which included representatives from affiliated branches in the provinces. The new church or Mandir of the new society was opened in Calcutta in 1881.

The New Dispensation

Keshab himself is said at this time to have fallen much under the influence of the great Hindu mystic and ascetic, Rāmakṛishṇa. He enúnciated the doctrine of progressive dispensations, of which his own was the last, and ordained twelve disciples, who with himself should be its Apostles. His church therefore came to be known as the Church of the New Dispensation. A more elaborate ritual and ceremonies were introduced into the services of the Mandir, including rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, mystic dances with music and singing of hymns, and even jugglery performances. Religious processions also were held, moving through the streets to the accompaniment of musical instruments and song, in imitation of Hindu festivals. In none of the churches of the Samāj do the women sit with the men, but they have a separate gallery provided for them, screened off from the rest of the

[1] On the circumstances of the secession see especially a letter from Sir C. P. Ilbèrt, quoted in the *Life of Sir W. W. Hunter*, p. 400 f.

congregation. The services themselves are modelled more or less closely upon Christian practice, with prayers and the reading of passages from the various sacred books. The buildings are plain, the Mandir of Keshab Chandar Sen being externally like a small Gothic church, and in its internal arrangements like a simple Nonconformist place of worship, with a pulpit and table raised on a daïs in the centre of one side, seats in front and on the two sides, and a gallery above.

Early in January of the year 1884 Keshab Chandar Sen died, and his body was burnt with simple rites on the banks of the Ganges.

Pratap Chandra Muzumdar

Among his leading followers the most capable and influential was Pratap Chandra Muzumdar, a man of scholarship and refinement, who seemed, by his ability and sympathy with the liberal views of Keshab, to be indicated as the latter's successor in the presidency of the Samāj. There was however considerable opposition to the election of any successor, a number of the members, led by the immediate relatives of Keshab himself, maintaining that his unique position towards the Samāj made it impossible for any one, however eminent, to succeed to his authority and office. These views prevailed; and the chair in the Church building which Keshab had occupied remained unfilled. The result was an unacknowledged schism in the Samāj, and Pratap Chandra Muzumdar never received the recognition or loyal adherence of the whole Church. On the other hand by his family and many of the leading missionaries a kind of cult of Keshab was instituted. The room in his house in which he passed away was preserved in exactly the condition in which he left it, in the oratory or small

chamber close by tablets to himself and to his wife were set up and meetings for devotion and prayer were held, and the day of his death came to be annually celebrated as the 'Assumption of the Master.' At this time the adherents of the Brāhma-Samāj were estimated to number about five thousand, with between one hundred and seventy and one hundred and eighty branches in Calcutta and the country districts.

The divisions within the Church of the New Dispensation have most seriously weakened its influence, and placed hindrances in the way of its missionary activity and success. Muzumdar himself was a man of studious habits and inclination rather than of action, and devoted himself chiefly to literary work and the editing of his paper, 'The Interpreter.' He died at Calcutta in May, 1905, at the age of sixty-five. In January of the same year Keshab's predecessor, Debendra Nāth Tāgore, had passed away at a great age. He had long withdrawn however from all active participation in the affairs of the Samāj, and had lived a retired and ascetic and saintly life, much respected and sought after by those who appreciated his gentle and attractive qualities.

Progress and Condition of the Reformed Churches

Since Keshab's death the Sādhāraṇa branch of the Samāj is the only one that has made real if slow progress. It is controlled by a general Committee, in which the capital city and the provinces are equally represented, and has been free from the divisions and personal animosities which have disturbed the older Churches of the reform. Both the Ādi Samāj and the Church of the New Dispensation have declined alike in numbers and in influence.

Related Societies

Kindred societies to the Brāhma-Samāj of Calcutta have been established in most of the principal cities of India, especially Bombay and Madras. In the former city they are known as Prārthana-Samāj, 'assemblies for prayer,' and are not in outward union with the Samājes of Calcutta, but have imitated their spirit and methods. The members of all the societies hold theistic views, profess the most unbounded admiration for the character and person of Christ,[1] and have nominally at least rejected the distinctive usages of Hinduism, and especially the observance of caste. In general discipline and observance also all are alike. They hold weekly meetings for worship and prayer, celebrate annual festivals, and carry on various kinds of philanthropic educational and missionary work. The Prārthana Society of Bombay, for example, maintains a mission to the depressed classes. There is little or no connection however between the associations of the different towns; nor have they ever succeeded in uniting their

[1] An illustration of this is found in a recent article by a writer of the Brāhma-Samāj :—'Jesus Christ seems to us to be as the loftiest Himālaya of the spiritual world, and during these many centuries people have been struggling hard to climb to the top of the holy mountain by various ways, but still they are far from the goal. . . . Among these seekers of Christ the Brahma-Samaj is one. The torch with which it humbly goes forth on the holy pilgrimage is the word of Christ, that no one can reveal the Son except the Father. . . . Our attitude to him crucified has been one of sincere loyalty, faith, reverence, and obedience. His words make our guide, which we interpret according to the light that has been vouchsafed unto us, and we have now landed in a place where knowledge and faith, letter and spirit, history and inner life, the past and the future, the East and the West, harmonise.' Quoted in *Harvest Field*, 1898, p. 342.

efforts or consolidating their work. The various sections into which they are divided are numerically and individually weak. They have moreover never gained or sought to gain a footing in the villages, and a society or church that in India ignores the villages is condemned to a very limited influence. To these causes, and especially to the lack of union among the churches and the decay of the missionary spirit, their leaders themselves ascribe the comparative ill-success which seems to have attended their efforts within recent years.

A somewhat similar association, which however owes its origin to influences more decidedly conservative and reactionary, is that of the Ārya-Samāj, founded in the year 1875 by a Śaivite Brāhman, Dayānanda Sarasvatī, in the West and North-West of India. Dayānanda was of high caste by birth, and early in life left his father's home in Kāthiāwār to avoid compliance with the customary Hindu ceremonies in regard to his proposed marriage. He spent the greater part of a long life as a wandering sannyāsin and preacher, urging the duty of a return to the simple teaching of the Vedas, in which he professed to find an exact theism, and expounding a system of doctrine that was ultimately based upon the philosophy of the Sāṅkhya-Yoga, of which both by birth and by conviction he was a professed and firm adherent. The Vedas were the source of all truth, the sole Divine revelation, in which was contained the germ of all exact and right teaching, whether of natural science or of religious doctrine. The main elements of belief which Dayānanda thus propounded on the basis of his interpretation of the Sanskrit Vedas were the unity and supremacy of God, His eternity omniscience and beneficence, the separate

Ārya-Samāj

and eternal existence of the human soul, and the binding and irrevocable force of karma. Thus man was responsible for all his deeds, and salvation consisted in a loosing of the grasp which karma had laid upon his personal life. On the other hand the pantheistic doctrines of the Vedānta, of the identity of the human soul with the divine, and of māyā, Dayānanda repudiated and inculcated always the duties of reverence towards the one God, of prayer, and of good works. After a strenuous life of missionary journeyings and activity he died at Ajmīr in the autumn of 1883, in the sixtieth year of his age.

The adherents of the Ārya-Samāj therefore claim to be strict and true Hindus, rejecting all distinctively Christian teaching, but equally setting aside polytheistic beliefs and idolatrous and other practices, which are asserted to be later unauthorised additions to a pure and primitive theism, and to form no part of the faith and worship inculcated in the Vedas. After the death of the founder divisions arose within the community, less on matters of doctrine than of discipline and practice, especially in regard to principles of education and training, and of abstinence from flesh food. From the latter restraint and limitation, approved by universal Hindu regulation and feeling, some of the younger members of the Samaj wished to be set free. The divergence of view on the subject of education led to the establishment of two separate colleges for the training of students and missionaries, an 'Anglo-Vedic' College at Lahore, which bears the name of the founder of the Samāj, and the Gurukala at Hardwār on the Ganges, in the Sahāranpur District of the United Provinces. The latter represents the views of the more conservative party

making it its aim to bring about a definite revival of ancient Hindu ideals and practices. The discipline of the college is strict, and the pupils or their parents on their behalf are required to take the triple vow of obedience, chastity, and poverty. The course of training extends over seventeen years, beginning at the age of eight, and includes the study of science and English, as well as of Sanskrit literature and ancient Hindu religious doctrine. The students are all resident, and do not leave the College even for a visit to their homes during the period of studentship. Thus at the close they are most strongly imbued with the spirit and aims of the Samāj, and prepared to undertake an earnest propaganda in its interests.

In all the meeting-places of the Ārya-Samāj the fire altar is erected after the ancient Vedic model. At the weekly services incense is burned on the altar, Vedic texts are recited, prayers are offered and addresses delivered. The strength of the society is in the Panjāb and United Provinces, where the greater number of its adherents are to be found; its influence extends however as far east as Burma. The various local Samājes are affiliated in a provincial assembly, and these again in a general assembly for all India, control being vested in a President with a Vice-President and subordinate officials. Membership of the society is open to all, and there have been instances of converts from Muhammadanism. In such cases provision is made for special ceremonies of purification and initiation, but the 'twice-born' are admitted without ceremony. The number of professed adherents is returned as 243,000 (census of 1911), representing a large increase during the decade, of whom the great majority belong to the two provinces above named.

The external work of the Samāj is carried on mainly in the departments of education, the production and spread of literature, and the promotion of social reform. A considerable number of preachers give the whole or part of their time to the objects of the Samāj. Orphanages and schools have been founded, and an effective literary propaganda is maintained by means of pamphlets and newspapers. The success attained however seems hardly to have been commensurate with the efforts put forth, and conflicting reports appear as to the results, numerical and otherwise, of the many-sided work in which the members of the society are engaged. There can be little doubt however that their teaching has exerted a strong leavening influence within some of the higher castes of North India.[1]

Other Reforming Sects: Prospects of Reform

There are other societies or sects in India professing a theistic faith, but their numbers are very small, and their influence entirely restricted and local. The total number therefore of the adherents of all the Theistic Churches of India, taken together, falls short of 300,000, or about one per cent. of the population. That their real influence is out of proportion to their numerical weakness may be taken for granted; and that influence is on the whole on the side of purity of living, and the uplifting of the people to a higher social practice and life. Nevertheless, their most eminent men themselves being witness, there appears to be a distinct abatement of spiritual

[1] See *Indian Census Report*, Calcutta, 1903, pp. 366 f., 393; *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 57 ff., and the literature there cited. An account of the doctrine and teaching of the Ārya-Samāj from within was given in an article by Lajpat Rai in the *Contemporary Review* for May, 1910.

energy and zeal.[1] And thus within a century of its birth the last and in many respects the most promising attempt at a moral rehabilitation and purification of Hinduism from within seems to make little real progress, and in the judgement of many has already entered on a period of decline. What the future may have in store for the Brāhma-Samāj, should some new leader arise with the ability and enthusiasm of Keshab Chandar Sen, it is impossible to foresee. But the apparent failure of the latest attempt to secure a fruitful compromise and reform has served to emphasize the real unwillingness or inability of the Hindu faith to meet the inmost needs of the human heart, or to promote a universal brotherhood in the love of the truth.

[1] Whatever the reason may be, the fact is almost a commonplace of the religious papers of India. At the annual Theistic Conference held in Madras a few years ago a paper was read the title of which was 'Why is the Theistic movement losing its hold of the Educated Classes?' The fact itself was not disputed. There have been few if any indications of a revival of influence within the succeeding years.

CHAPTER V

BUDDHISM

The religious system which takes its name from *Buddha*, or more correctly *the Buddha*,[1] is distinguished from the vast and complex systems of Hinduism in that more definitely it seems to bear the impress of a single mind, and like Muhammadanism or Christianity traces its origin historically to the work and teaching of an individual founder. The person and life of that founder have been enveloped in a cloud of romance and fable, through which it is not always easy to discern the real facts. The main outlines of his life, however, as derived from the records of the sacred books and from the accounts of disciples and pilgrims, may be determined with as close an approximation to certainty as so great an interval of time admits. The investigations of recent years have all tended to support the general reliability of the narratives.

Complex Character

Greater difficulty besets the question of doctrine. How far the formulae and expansion of this are due to the Buddha himself, or to what precise extent his teaching as originally conceived has become distorted, supplemented, or enlarged in later times, must remain for the present at least open to question. That in

[1] The word is of course a title or descriptive epithet, not a proper name; and signifies the 'wise' or 'enlightened' one. A list of earlier Buddhas, who preceded the Buddha of history is given in Monier-Williams' *Buddhism*, London, 1889, p. 135 f., or Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, 1896, p. 32.

India Buddhism arose as a protest against the unfruitful doctrines of a philosophical Brāhmanism, especially the way of salvation by works, *karma-kāṇḍa*; and that this was the secret of its early and widespread success, can hardly be doubted. While however it was thus direct and simple in its beginnings, in the many countries where it has found a home, in Ceylon and Burma, in China Korea and Japan, in Tibet and the central tableland of Asia, Buddhism is as many-sided as Hinduism itself, and has scarcely any more right to be regarded as a single or consistent form of religious faith. Philosophically it is at no distant remove from pessimism; conscious existence in any form is an evil; from this therefore the wise man will make good his escape at the earliest possible opportunity. With much earnestness however it forbids escape by the method of self-destruction. Ethically it has made perhaps the nearest approach to the Christian standard that the world has known; by its sacred books it inculcates, if its adherents do not always practise, a lofty morality and philanthropy. Theologically it is atheistic, or at least agnostic. Doctrinally it is a combination of idealism and superstition, often in their most extravagant forms, with far-sighted strivings after truth. In practical life it occupies every extreme, from the hard tyranny of an ignorant and greedy priesthood to the light-hearted fatalism which eats and drinks and enjoys itself. Modern Buddhism has thus travelled far from the simplicity of its early faith. And the attempt to return, made by some of its leaders and adherents to-day, cannot but command sympathy, in so far as it is an endeavour to substitute nobler ideals for that which had descended to the level of the commonplace and unworthy.

Religious Character of Buddhism

It is perhaps hardly necessary to vindicate in formal terms the claim of Buddhism to be a religion, and not a mere philosophy. It is true that in its original form, as preserved and interpreted by the Southern School of Ceylon, the element of worship is statedly omitted. How far however the Pāli books rightly and fully reflect the mind of the founder in this respect, or how much is due to later thinkers and commentators, may be doubted. If however the creed and teaching of the Buddha himself was in the first instance entirely agnostic, and he refused to allow to his followers the assistance derived from reliance upon a higher power, thus ignoring what to our thought is an essential element of religion in the highest, or indeed in any sense of the term, it is a comparatively small proportion of Buddhists who have remained even professedly faithful to a colourless and purely ethical system. The so-called Northern School, far more widely extended and influential, is based upon the most intensely devotional and religious spirit, and has developed the forms and ceremonies of worship to a remarkable degree. In Eastern religions moreover the philosophical and metaphysical element is always more prominent than in the West: the peoples of India, perhaps by nature more religiously inclined than any other people in the world, have incorporated into and made an inseparable part of their faiths systems of abstract reasoning and speculation most elaborate and diverse. The claim therefore of Buddhism to be a true religion must not be ruled out *in limine*, deficient as it may seem to be according to the interpretation of its authorised literary exponents, when compared with Christianity. The two

faiths have in reality much in common. On the other hand, the extravagant eulogies that have been passed on Buddhist moral teaching, comparing it with Christian, often to the disadvantage of the latter, are as misleading as they are unjust. The beauty of much that Buddhism enjoins in the sphere of ethics is unquestioned, and needs no false or exaggerated support. Practice however follows no more closely upon precept in Buddhist than in other lands. In Buddhist writings there will be found much that breathes a lofty moral tone and inculcates a high moral behaviour. It is not certain however to what extent such teaching is primitive or the result of later reflection, or how far it has been due to the influence and contact of other faiths.

Disappearance from India

From its birthplace and ancient home the religion of the Buddha has been entirely driven. There are now few Buddhists proper in India, and the faith of these has become so contaminated by foreign elements that it hardly deserves the name of Buddhism. That it went forth after a long and keen struggle for existence can scarcely be doubted; and it has left its mark upon Brāhmanism and Brāhmanical practice scarcely less deeply than Hindu philosophy and thought through its founder and early adherents have entered into it. The circumstances however and precise date of its departure remain in obscurity. There is no proof of a violent conflict between the established religion of the Brāhmans and the Buddhist heresies, or of active persecution on the one side or the other. Such a conflict is in itself improbable, and all the available evidence tends to show that the two religions lived at peace. On the contrary the Muhammadan invasions of the eleventh and following centuries were

attended by persecutions and bloodshed on a large scale, and carried the fire and sword of religious fanaticism through the whole north of India. More pliant Brāhmanism bent to the storm and survived, to place itself at the service of the conqueror and to win its greater victories in the arts of peace. Buddhism, probably already decadent, could neither compromise nor resist, and was forced to retire from the field, leaving behind it only striking monuments of its former greatness. Thus while the Buddhist faith is predominant in the countries already named, and wields a measure of influence elsewhere, in its native country its tenets and teaching are represented only by a few sectaries and by the independent but closely related sect of the Jainas, who with a comparatively small following have similar doctrines and constitution. The total number of real Buddhists existing at the present time it is not easy to determine, the uncertain factor in the account being China. Its place is probably fifth[1] in order of the great religions, with less than a hundred million adherents.

Life of the Buddha

The precise date of the birth of the future Buddha has been much disputed, and a determination that is beyond question is perhaps hardly to be expected.[2] The most probable view places his birth in the earlier part of the sixth century before Christ. The details also of his life have been so overlaid with romance,

[1] Deussen, i. 3. p. 118, places it second.

[2] Early Buddhist chronology is admittedly uncertain and obscure. But the limits of uncertainty have been much diminished by the very thorough discussion which the subject has received. The great antiquity claimed by Buddhist tradition for the life and work of Gautama has never been accepted by European scholars. On the other hand the extreme scepticism, which

and so encrusted with legend and fable, that it is difficult if not impossible to distinguish in all cases

transferred his entire existence to the region of fable, has been abandoned. Three dates form land-marks in the early religious history of India, and have been determined from external considerations beyond the reach of reasonable doubt. These are the reign of the great Buddhist king Aśoka, whose grandfather C'andragupta is identified with the Sandrokottos of the Greek historians, contemporary with Seleucus I. Nicator, who died in the year 280 B.C.; and the visits to India of the Chinese monks and pilgrims Fā-Hian and Hiuen-Tsiang. Aśoka reigned B.C. 273–2 to 231. The Chinese pilgrims are *circa* 400 A.D. and 630 A.D. respectively. To these fixed dates may be added as a fourth the period of the life and travels of I-Tsing in the last quarter of the seventh century.[1] From these *data* combined with the records of the native Buddhist chronicles, Max Müller concluded that the death of the Buddha took place 477 B.C.; and in this finding the late Prof. Georg Bühler concurred. In a series of articles in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1909–1910, Dr. Fleet determines the exact date to be 483 B.C., and this may certainly be accepted as the nearest approximation at which it is possible with the available evidence to arrive. An early reckoning current in Ceylon and elsewhere places his death sixty-one years before this time.[2] Since therefore all accounts agree that he lived to the age of eighty, it would follow that he was born in or about the year 560 B.C. T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, 1910, p. 213, states his conclusion 'that the Buddha died about 500 B.C.' Others, as Westergaard and Kern, bring the time of his death down to a considerably later period, *circa* 370 B.C. The subject is discussed by Prof. Max Müller, *SBE*, vol. x², p. xliii. ff., with a chronological table, and at greater length in *History of Sanskrit Literature*², pp. 262 ff., 299; Kern, p. 101 ff.; Barth, p. 105 ff.; and by many others.

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[1] See I-Tsing's *Record of the Buddhist Religion*, translated by J. Takakusu, Oxford, 1896, pp. xxv.–xxxviii.

[2] *Loc. cit.*, 1909, p. 322; cp. review by Dr. Fleet of an Essay by an Indian scholar, P. C. Mukherji, who endeavoured to establish a date in the earlier part of the sixth century B.C., in *JRAS*, 1900, p. 568 ff. The initial date of C'andragupta is 'closely about 320 B.C.,' *id. ib.* 1906, p. 894.

the false from the true. With the rejection of the miraculous element, not much remains that is certainly known concerning him. His father was named S'uddhodana, a prince of the royal family of the S'ākyas, a Rājput clan, holding sway in the part of India which is now the kingdom of Oudh together with the adjoining districts of Nepāl. There in the Lumbini Grove by the town of Kapilavastu, the ruins of which lie hidden in the dense *tarai* region beyond the British border about thirty miles north-west of the modern village or station of Uska Bazar, Gautama Buddha was born.[1] The name which he

[1] The discovery in the year 1895 of the true site according to ancient belief of Kapilavastu excited much interest; see articles by Vincent A. Smith in *JRAS*, 1897, pp. 615 ff., 644 ff.; and a letter from G. Bühler, which originally appeared in the *Athenaeum*, *ib.* p. 429 ff. The city itself was destroyed, according to the tradition, during the lifetime of the Buddha; but the place was visited by king Aśoka, and by both Fā-Hian[1] and Hiuen-Tsiang.[2] 'The identification of Kapilavastu was determined by the discovery in March, 1895, of the Aśoka pillar at Niglīva, and the associated *stūpa* of Konāgamana, or Kanaka Muni Buddha. Niglīva is a small Nepalese village in the Tarāi, or lowlands below the hills . . . about thirty-eight miles north-west of the Uskā Bazar Station on the Bengal and North-Western Railway, and about twelve miles from the Chilliā Police Station in the Basti District.'[3] The Chinese pilgrims indicate that Kapilavastu is distant only a few miles from Niglīva; and the ruins of the city were actually so found, overgrown with jungle, with an inscribed pillar of Aśoka half buried in the ground. The inscription on the latter is thus translated by G. Bühler:—'King Piyadasi (*i.e.* Aśoka), beloved of the gods, having been anointed twenty years, himself came and worshipped, saying, "Here Buddha Shakyamuni was born" . . . and he caused a stone pillar to be erected, which declares "Here the worshipful one

[1] Legge, *Fā-Hien*, p. 64.

[2] Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 13 ff.

[3] *Loc. cit.*, p. 616. 'Thirty-eight miles' admittedly, I believe, by an error overstates the distance.

received is perhaps derived from that of the ancient *ri*shi Gotama, to whom are ascribed some of the

was born.'' '[1] See also an article on *Kapilavastu in the Buddhist Books* by the late T. Watters in the same Journal for 1898, p. 533 ff.; and notes and descriptions of discoveries by V. A. Smith, *ib.* p. 573 ff. 'The Niglīva pillar with the inscription recording Aśoka's visit to the *stūpa* of Kanakamuni lies . . . just outside the southern limit of the ruins of Kapilavastu, which extend for several miles east and west. The western end of the ruins of the city rests on the left or eastern bank of the Bāngangā river, a considerable stream which descends from the hills and joins the Rāptī in the Bastī District. The breadth of the city of Kapilavastu north and south was much less than its length east and west. The position of Kapilavastu may be defined as approximately in latitude 27° 37′ N. and longitude 83° 8′ E.'[2]

[1] *ibid.*, p. 429. Later translations and discussions have been very numerous. V. A. Smith gives a revised and freer rendering in *Ind. Antiquary*, vol. xxxiv. (1905), p. 4:—'His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, having come in person twenty years after his coronation did reverence (*saying*) "Here was Buddha born, the sage of the Sākyas." And he caused a faultless block of stone to be prepared, and set up a stone-pillar (*made from it, saying*) "Here was the Venerable One born." And he made the village of Lummini revenue free, in its entirety.' The inscription itself is perfect, but the meaning of a few words is uncertain. The title *Piyadasi*, Sanskrit *Priyadarśin*, signifies 'kindly,' 'benevolent'; see a discussion of its technical meaning, as a title or name of king Aśoka, by Mr. Smith, *ib.* vol. xxxii. p. 265. Dr. J. F. Fleet discusses the inscription in *JRAS*, 1908, pp. 471 ff., 823, cp. *id.* 1909, p. 760 ff., and translates as follows:—'The king Devānampiya-Piyadassi, when he was twenty-years-anointed, did (*this place*) the honour of coming (*here*) in person. Because Buddha was born here, the Sakya saint, he caused a stone surrounding and screening wall to be made, and a stone pillar to be set up. Because the Blessed One was born here, he made the village Lummini free of rent and entitled to the (*king's*) eighth share (*of the grain*).' For a facsimile of the inscription see G. Bühler, *Epigr. Indica*, vol. v.; V. A. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 145.

[2] *JRAS*, 1898, p. 580; compare P. C. Mukherji, *Report on Explorations in the Nepalese Tarai*, Calcutta, 1900; W. Vost, in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 553 ff.; V. A. Smith, *Early History of India*,

hymns of the Rigveda; it would therefore signify 'related to' or 'descended from' Gotama. He is also known as *S'ākyamuni*, 'the sage of the S'ākyas,' *Siddhārtha*, 'he who has accomplished his aim,' and *Tathāgata*, 'one who has reached the truth.' The dream of his mother Māyā or Mahā-Māyā is well known, in which she beheld the future Buddha descending from heaven, and entering her womb in the form of a white elephant. Hence to a Buddhist the elephant is the most sacred of all animals. She herself died within seven days of his birth, and was transported to the heaven of S'akrā or Indra, whither her son later ascended in order in person to instruct her in his law.[1] Over his birth the gods themselves presided, and his coming was heralded by favourable omens and portents. In particular it was prophesied concerning the son who was to be born that he would become either a Universal Monarch or a Buddha. Mighty earthquakes and miracles of healing took place; flowers bloomed and gentle rains fell although out of season; heavenly music was heard, delicious scents filled the air, and the very water of the ocean lost its saltness and became sweet and refreshing. On his birth the boy was received by four Brahma angels; and proclaimed at once with a loud voice his own greatness.[2] At the same moment his future wife was

1904, pp. 31, 139, and *Aśoka*, in 'Rulers of India' series, Oxford, 1901, p. 34 ff. On theoretical and philological grounds Max Müller preferred to write *Kapilavâstu*, 'the dwelling-place of Kapila'; *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, 1899, p. 312 and note.

[1] On the ascent to the *trayastrimśat* heaven, the heaven of the gods, compare W. W. Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 80 f.

[2] In two of his previous existences also the Buddha is said to have uttered words immediately after his birth. *Jātaka*, i. 53, quoted in Warren, p. 47.

born, and also the sacred Bo-Tree, under which he was destined to attain Buddhahood.

A further and more definite prophecy was uttered by a gifted ascetic to whom the child was brought, that at the age of thirty-five he would surely become a Buddha; and again to the father the announcement was made that in due time the 'four signs' would appear to his son, which would lead him to retire from the world and enter upon the course ordained for him :—

> Then said the king, 'What shall my son see to make him retire from the world?'
>
> 'The four signs.'
>
> 'What four?'
>
> 'A decrepit old man, a diseased man, a dead man, and a monk.'
>
> 'From this time forth,' said the king, 'let no such persons be allowed to come near my son. It will never do for my son to become a Buddha. What I would wish to see is my son exercising sovereign rule and authority over the four great continents and the two thousand attendant isles, and walking through the heavens surrounded by a retinue thirty-six leagues in circumference.' And when he had so spoken he placed guards for a distance of a quarter of a league in each of the four directions, in order that none of these four kinds of men might come within sight of his son.[1]

The prince also marries, and in due course has a son born to him. In spite however of all precautions, and of the delights and distractions by which he is surrounded, the four signs successively appear before him by the intervention and contrivance of the gods themselves. He accordingly determines to renounce the world; but before carrying out his purpose visits once more his wife and child as they lie asleep, only abstaining from

[1] *Jātaka*, i. 57; Warren, p. 53; cp. *Buddhaćarita* iii., *SBE* xlix. p. 27 ff.

waking them lest their entreaties and caresses should interfere to turn him from his settled resolve. At this time, the hour of the 'Great Renunciation,' he is said to have been twenty-nine years old.

His departure from the city was accompanied by miraculous signs, in the same manner as when he had been born. The gods themselves stifled the sound of his horse's neighing, lest the warders and city should be aroused, and prevented its hoofs from noisily touching the ground; while the heavy outer gates opened to him of their own accord. *Māra* too, the prince of evil, endeavoured but without success to win him to return. Then began the so-called 'Great Struggle,' lasting according to the tradition for six years. After visiting Rājag*ri*ha,[1] the future Buddha proceeded to Uruvelā, where in company with five ascetics he entered upon a course of austerities which were by him carried to such an extreme that he fell down senseless and was believed to be dead:—

> Then certain of the deities said, 'The monk Gotama is dead'; but others said, 'This is a practice of the saints.' Then those who thought he was dead went to king Suddhodana, and announced to him that his son was dead.
>
> 'Did he die after becoming a Buddha, or before?' asked the king.
>
> 'He was unable to become a Buddha, but in making the Struggle he fell to the ground and died.'
>
> When the king heard this he refused to credit it, saying, 'I

[1] Rājag*ri*ha, the capital of Magadha, is represented by the modern village of Rājgir, about twenty-five miles south-south-east of Patna. The name means the king's house or palace. The ruins of the old town lie directly south of Rājgir, and cover an area of about sixteen square miles. Three of the five surrounding hills are now occupied by Jaina temples. See *Gazetteer of India*, *s.v.*; Monier-Williams, pp. 403–406.

do not believe it. Death cannot come to my son before he attains to enlightenment.'

. . . . . .

But the future Buddha recovering his consciousness and standing up, the deities went a second time to the king, and told him that his son was well again.

Said the king, 'I knew that my son could not have died.'

Now the six years which the Great Being thus spent in austerities were like time spent in endeavouring to tie the air into knots. And coming to the decision, 'These austerities are not the way to enlightenment,' he went begging through villages and market-towns for ordinary material food, and lived upon it. And his thirty-two physical characteristics as a great being again appeared, and the colour of his body became like unto gold.[1]

Attainment of Buddhahood

On his abandonment of the practice of austerities, the five ascetics his companions left him; and alone under the sacred Bo-Tree,[2] having bathed and fortified himself with food, seated on the eastern side of the tree upon a seat or throne of grass, he gave himself up to the attainment of supreme wisdom. Here he was again assailed by Māra with all his host, at whose approach the gods fled away, defeated and terrified, and the future Buddha was left without companion or help. Māra

[1] *Jātaka*, i. 67; Warren, p. 70 f.

[2] The Bodhi or Bo-Tree, the 'tree of Knowledge,' is the pīpal, the *Aśvattha*, or *Ficus Religiosa*, a tree as holy to Buddhists as to Hindus. Each of the Buddhas has his own sacred tree, under which he attains Buddhahood. There seems no reason to doubt that the very old pīpal existing a few years ago at Buddh Gayā was a descendant of the original Bo-Tree. It is believed by all Buddhists to be the identical tree. See Monier-Williams, pp. 392–94; *Gazetteer of India*, *s.v.* Buddh Gayā; Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 115 ff. According to the tradition a branch from the tree was conveyed to Ceylon in the time of Aśoka, and was there received with much ceremony by the ruling monarch, and planted at Anuradhapura; *Mahāvaṁsa*, ch. xviii.

and his forces directed against him in succession whirlwinds and storms of miraculous violence, with showers of rocks, weapons, live coals, etc., but these were all changed to flowers when they reached the Buddha, and fell at his feet. Finally Māra hurled his mighty discus, which could 'cut through solid stone pillars as if they had been the tips of bamboo shoots.' The result was however equally disappointing, and the forces of evil were compelled to retire discomfited; while the gods reassured chanted hymns of victory.

> It was before the sun had set that the Great Being thus vanquished the army of Māra. And then, while the Bo-Tree in homage rained red coral-like sprigs upon his priestly robes, he acquired in the first watch of the night the knowledge of previous existences; in the middle watch of the night the divine eye; and in the last watch of the night his intellect fathomed Dependent Origination.[1]

Up to this time Gautama had been merely a *Bodhisattva*, one who was destined to attain to supreme wisdom. Henceforth he is *Buddha*, the 'enlightened one.'

Different traditions exist with regard to the events of the time immediately succeeding the Buddha's attainment of omniscience. According to one account he remained fasting for seven weeks, 'enjoying the bliss of emancipation,' and meditating on the truths he had discovered. Others describe him as spending seven days in succession under the Bo-Tree; the 'Goat-Herd's Banyan,' where Māra with the help of his three daughters, Thirst Craving and Lust, endeavoured without success to incite him to evil thoughts and to the abandonment of his purpose of preaching the law; the Mućalinda tree, from

[1] *Jātaka*, i. 75; Warren, p. 82.

beneath which Mućalinda the king of the serpents came forth, and spread his hood above the Buddha to protect him from the clouds and rain; and the Rājāyatana tree whence he returned to the banyan. At the Rājāyatana tree two merchants approached and offered him food, which he accepted, eating out of a bowl presented to him at the moment by the four divinities that guard the four quarters of the globe. The two merchants made reverent obeisance to him, and professed themselves his followers. Thus they became the earliest lay-disciples.

The first converts to enter the order of monks that the Buddha established were the five ascetics with whom he had previously lived practising austerities. These he sought out in the Deer-Park, *Isipatana*, at Benares[1]; and proclaimed to them the new doctrine, 'setting in motion the wheel of the law,' and by this his first sermon founding 'the highest kingdom of Truth.'[2] Thenceforth he devoted himself to itinerating from place to place, and preaching to all whom he encountered. These journeyings were confined for the most part to the kingdom of Magadha,[3] and especially the country around

Early Converts

[1] The Government of India have for several years conducted excavations at Sārnāth, which have resulted in discoveries of much interest. Many stūpas, shrines, and sculptured stones have been found, and the ruins of a series of monastic buildings uncovered, belonging to different epochs, the lowest dating back to the Gupta period in the fourth and fifth centuries. Whether earlier remains are preserved in a still lower stratum as yet unexamined is uncertain. See the reports of the Director-General of Archaeology, J. H. Marshall, in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 905 ff., and 1908, p. 1088 ff.

[2] *Mahāvagga*, i. 6. 30.

[3] Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 82 ff.

Rājagṛiha and S'rāvastī,[1] but are traditionally said to have extended also far into the north-west of India and the Panjāb. Of the early converts two of the most notable were Sāriputta and Moggallāna, both of whom received the truth from the lips of a certain monk Assaji, a disciple of the Buddha, who declared to them the substance of his doctrine. Thereupon they made their way to the Buddha himself, professed the faith, and were admitted by him into the Order.[2] Both are recorded to have died before their Master. Other celebrated names among the early followers of the Buddha are those of Ānanda, his cousin, and favourite disciple and attendant; Kāśyapa, the president of the first great Council, held immediately after his death; and Upāli, who responded at this Council concerning the Vinaya rules, while Ānanda declared the Dharma. These and many others the Buddha ordained, and sent forth as missionaries to proclaim his doctrine. The last of his immediate converts was Subhadda, who came to him on the day before his death, seeking instruction and the resolution of his doubts. He

[1] Legge, *Fā-Hien*, p. 55 ff.; Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 1 ff. By Sir A. Cunningham S'rāvastī was identified with the extensive ruins of Sahet Mahet, in the Gonda District of Oudh, on the south bank of the Rāptī river; and the correctness of the identification has apparently been proved by the discovery on the site of a copper-plate grant to 'the Community of Buddhist Friars . . . residing in the great convent of holy Jetavana'; see *JRAS*, 1908, pp. 971 ff., 1098 f. For an alternative identification with a site in Nepāl on the upper Rāptī, see V. A. Smith *ibid.*, 1898 p. 520 ff., 1900 p. 1 ff. There is a description of S'rāvastī from the Sinhalese chronicles in Geiger, *Literatur u. Sprache der Singalesen*, Strassburg, 1901, p. 14 f. Cp. *Imperial Gaz. of India*, *s.v.* Sahet Mahet.

[2] *Mahāv.*, i. 23, 24.

was taught the noble eightfold path, and admitted a member of the order of monks.[1]

Forty-five years were thus spent in teaching and preaching, during which time Gautama Buddha appears never to have had a settled dwelling-place. At the close of this period, when the appointed time drew near for his passing away, or for the attainment of *parinirvāṇa*,[2] he came attended by Ānanda to the śāla-tree grove at Kuśanagara.[3] There he invited the assembled monks to question him if they had any doubt in their minds or difficulty unsolved. They remained silent, and their Master delivered to them his last charges :

Death of the Buddha

> Now the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda, and said :—It may be, Ānanda, that in some of you the thought may arise, 'The word of the Master is ended, we have no teacher more. But it is not thus, Ānanda, that you should

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[1] *Mahā-Parinibbāna Sutta*, v. 52–69.

[2] The authoritative account of the death of the Buddha, which, though embellished with extravagant details, appears in essentials to have preserved a true tradition, is contained in the *Mahā-Parinibbāna Sutta*, or 'Book of the Great Decease,' translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, *SBE*, vol. xi., also *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, 1910, p. 78 ff. The relevant portions are in Warren, pp. 95–110. The translator assigns the composition of the work to a date at least one hundred years after the Buddha's death, about the end of the fourth or beginning of the third century B.C.; *op. cit.*, pp. xvii., xix. It may be doubted whether this is not an excessive estimate of its antiquity. *Parinibbāna* is the Pāli form of the Sanskrit *parinirvāṇa*, further or final nirvāṇa; *infra*, p. 533.

[3] The scene of the Buddha's death has not been identified. Sir A. Cunningham placed it at Kasiā in the North-West Provinces, about forty miles east of Gorakhpur. Recent investigations and discoveries appear to have made the identification improbable if not impossible. According to Fā-Hian, chh. xxiii., xxiv., it was twenty-five *yojanas* east of Kapilavastu.

regard it. The Doctrine and Discipline which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let these, after I am gone, be the Teacher to you.

. . . . . .

Then the Blessed One addressed the brethren, and said :— It may be, brethren, that there may be doubt or misgiving in the mind of some brother as to the Buddha or the Doctrine or the Order or the Path or the course of conduct. Enquire, brethren, freely. Do not have to reproach yourselves afterwards with the thought, 'Our Teacher was face to face with us, and we could not bring ourselves to enquire of the Blessed One when we were face to face with him.'

And when he had thus spoken the brethren were silent.

And again a second and a third time the Blessed One addressed the brethren in the same words ; and a second and a third time the brethren were silent.

Then the Blessed One addressed the brethren, and said :— It may be, brethren, that you put no questions, out of respect for the Teacher. Let one friend communicate to another.

And when he had thus spoken the brethren were silent.

And the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One :— 'How wonderful a thing is it, Reverend Sir, and how marvellous ! Verily, I believe that in this whole assembly of the brethren there is not one brother who has any doubt or misgiving as to the Buddha or the Doctrine or the Order or the Path or the course of conduct.'

'With you, Ānanda, it is a matter of faith, when you say that ; but with the Tathāgata, Ānanda, it is a matter of knowledge that in this whole assembly of the brethren there is not one brother who has any doubt or misgiving as to the Buddha or the Doctrine or the Order or the Path or the course of conduct. For even the most backward, Ānanda, of all these five hundred brethren has become converted, and is no longer liable to be born in a state of suffering, and is assured of final salvation.'

Then the Blessed One addressed the brethren, and said :— 'Behold now, brethren, I take my leave of you ; all the constituents of being are transitory ; work out your salvation with diligence.'

This was the last word of the Tathāgata.[1]

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[1] *Mahā-Parin. Sutta*, vi. 1, 5–10 ; *SBE*, xi. p. 112 ff. ; Warren, p. 107 ff.

According to the very curious tradition, which can hardly be a mere invention, death was due to over-indulgence in 'dried boar's flesh.'[1] This was served to the Buddha and his disciples together; but Gautama refused to allow the others to partake lest injury should thereby be caused to them, and gave orders that the remainder of the meat should be buried in the ground.[2]

The text proceeds to describe the effect produced by his death on the deities as well as on the physical universe, together with the sorrow of his disciples and of the men of Kuśanagara. Under the direction of Ānanda the body was borne to a spot outside of the city on the east, and there placed on a 'funeral pile of all kinds of perfumes.' The chiefs of the city in vain endeavoured to set fire to it. After however the corpse had been reverentially saluted by Mahā Kāśyapa with five hundred brethren, who arrived late at the place, and passed thrice round the pyre, it spontaneously began to burn; and when the flames had done their work, they were again miraculously extinguished. The bones and relics that remained were gathered together, divided into eight portions by the Brāhman Drona, and distributed to as many

Funeral Pyre and Relics

[1] The meaning of the original is probably not meat or flesh, but a vegetable or other delicacy, that formed a favourite food of the wild boar. See art. *Buddha* in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 884.

[2] *Mahā-Parin. Sutta*, iv. 17 ff. The most painstaking and thorough discussion of the date of the death of the Buddha is perhaps that by Dr. Fleet in *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 1–34. Cp. M. de Zilva Wikremasinghe in *Epigr. Zeylanica*, i. pp. 142 n. 7,156 f.; W. Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, London, 1912, Introd., p. xxii. ff.; *supra*, p. 437.

claimants.[1] Over each portion, and over the vessel in which the relics had been collected, a *dāgaba* was erected and homage paid. These buildings remained for many years centres of pilgrimage, and were visited amongst others by the Chinese monks who came to India in search of copies of the Law.

Council at Rājagṛiha

The accepted tradition goes on to relate that the details of the Law, as far at least as the main outlines of the system and the regulations for the monastic life were concerned, were determined at a great Council held at Rājagṛiha immediately after the Buddha's death. In the eleventh book of the *C'ullavagga* is found the canonical record of the Council, certain preliminary sections of which coincide verbally with parts of the *Mahāparin. Sutta*, betraying a common origin.[2] In the latter work however no mention is made of a general Council, to the holding of which in the former the same recorded incidents are immediately preliminary. It appears therefore to be a legitimate inference that at least in its present form this part of the C'ullavagga is later than the Parin. Sutta, and may only doubtfully be relied upon as an authority for the facts.[3] The historical frame-work

[1] On the distribution of the relics see also arts. by J. F. Fleet in *JRAS*, 1906 p. 655 ff., 1907 p. 341 ff.

[2] *C'ullav.*, xi. 1=*P. S.*, vi. 36–41.

[3] Cp. *SBE*, xi. p. x. ff.; the circumstances and authenticity of the Council are discussed by V. A. Smith in *JRAS*, 1901, p. 842 ff., and elsewhere. The received chronology and order of events rests upon the authority of the Ceylon records,

of the Council itself does not however vary in the different accounts that have been preserved. At the instance and under the presidency of Mahā Kāśyapa, five hundred monks came together at Rājagṛiha, where they spent the rainy season, and in response to the questions of the president Upāli[1] and Ānanda rehearsed respectively the Vinaya and Dharma. Thus was established a fixed and authorised version of the sayings of the Master immediately after his decease.[2]

Apart from the general uncertainty attaching to tradition there seems no reason to doubt that a gathering of this kind of the early and most respected disciples of Gautama was really held, and in some sort determined a received text of the Buddhist Scriptures. It is noteworthy, however, that no precise date is given for the Council, beyond the vague indication that it took place

concerning the reliability of which conflicting judgements have been formed. There can be no doubt that an artificial element has entered into their computations of time and date, and that they have systematized and brought into order floating traditions. From this however to the rejection of their whole scheme of early chronology, as is done for instance by Mr. Smith, is a far step. See a defence of the honesty and conscientiousness of the 'Southern' Buddhist Chronicles by H. C. Norman in *JRAS*, 1908, p. 1 ff.; cp. Fleet, *ut sup.*, p. 449 n.; W. Geiger, Mahāvaṁsa, p. xii. ff. On the Councils themselves, and the Pāli narrative, see also W. Geiger, *loc. cit.*, p. li. ff., where references to further discussions are given.

[1] Upāli was the first of the great Theras, chiefs or presidents of the Vinaya. A list of their names, taken from the Ceylon chronicles, will be found in *JRAS*, 1908, p. 5 f.; cp. Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, p. xlvii. ff.

[2] Compare the curious and naïve account in *C'ullav.*, xi. 11 of the monk Purāṇa, who refused to accept the text adopted by the members of the Council, preferring his own recollection of the Buddha's words.

shortly after his death. And no reference is made to the Abhidharma, the third division which, with the Vinaya and the Dharma, completes the Buddhist Canon.

Council at Vaiśālī

A hundred years later a second general Council met at Vaiśālī to pronounce upon the lawfulness or otherwise of certain relaxations of strict rule and discipline, which had been adopted by a party among the monks. The account of this second Council is contained in the twelfth or last book of the Cullavagga. Of the 'ten points' concerned, the most important were the prohibitions against receiving gifts of money or using unfermented spirits,[1] and the right of an assembly of monks to perform official acts even though they were not unanimous. The questions raised were purely disciplinary, restrictions of the habits and freedom of members of the Order, and did not concern the laity or the outside world. To all ten points a formal and careful consideration was given, and the opinions of the most respected and influential monks obtained thereon; with the result that the orthodox view which forbade these licences was affirmed, and the more lax party censured. Sinhalese chronicles add that after the decision had been given, a second or supplementary Council was summoned, and attended by no fewer than ten thousand dissentient monks. To this Council was given the name of *Mahāsaṅgīti*, or 'Great Council'; and here, as at Rājagṛiha, the Vinaya and Dharma were rehearsed, no mention being made of the Abhidharma.

[1] These are explained to be 'spirits which have left the condition of not being spirits, and yet have not acquired intoxicating properties.' *Cullav.*, xii. 1. 10, 2. 8.

If the name *Mahāsaṅgīti* is to be taken literally, it would seem to imply that the unorthodox were numerically stronger than their opponents. The tradition of the Northern School however gives a different explanation of the term. The earlier orthodox assembly is altogether ignored; and it is asserted that the Council was called Mahāsaṅgīti, because attended by both monks and laymen. The date there assigned to it is a hundred and ten years after the death of the Buddha. In neither tradition is any direct mention made of the place at which this Council was held.[1]

Whether the Council at Vaiśālī is to be regarded as a historical fact, or whether the accounts that have been preserved are only confused echoes of earlier and later gatherings for the settlement of disputed points, that in southern tradition have crystallized into one, must be allowed to be uncertain. In either case the period of one hundred or one hundred and ten years from the *parinirvāṇa* is to be considered a round number. It is probable enough that attempts would be made to reconcile or put down practices regarded as abhorrent to the strict rule of earlier Buddhism. But how far these attempts were seriously meant, or to what extent they secured their object, it is impossible to determine. The conflicting accounts of tradition would appear to conceal or gloss over a very limited success. All that can with confidence be asserted is

[1] Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 66 ff.; Legge, *Fā-Hien*, ch. xxv.; V. A. Smith, *Aśoka*, 1901, pp. 34, 50 f., and *JRAS*, 1905, p. 152 ff. The site of Vaiśālī, *Pāli* Vesali, has not been determined with certainty. The town was the capital of the Liććhavi tribe, and lay northwards of and not far from Patna. By M. Vost it is identified with Manjhi on the left bank of the Gogra, a few miles above its confluence with the Ganges; *JRAS*, 1903, p. 583. Cp. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, 1903, p. 40 f.

that a schism in thought and feeling, if not in name, had already begun.

Council at Pātaliputra

Of the third great Council held at Pātaliputra,[1] or Patna, under the presidency of king Aśoka, about a century after that of Vaiśālī, no mention is made in the canonical books; and by the Northern School it is passed over in complete silence. The written records also of the king himself, his edicts and inscriptions, make no reference to the Council. The extant narratives therefore which relate to it are derived entirely from Southern tradition, and as far as details are concerned appear to be even less trustworthy than those of the earlier Councils. It is in itself probable that such an assembly would be called together by the Buddhist sovereign; but nothing can be certainly affirmed of its work, or of the scope of its discussions.[2] From one point of view at least it was inferior in authority to its predecessors, since the party whose broader, laxer views had given rise to the contentions at Vaiśālī held aloof, and attendance was

[1] On the city and its site see Legge, *Fā-Hien*, ch. xxvii.; Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 82 ff.; *JRAS*, 1901, pp. 851, 856; L. A. Waddell, *Discovery of Exact Site of Aśoka's Classic Capital of Pātaliputra*, Calcutta, 1892; *Imp. Gaz. of India*, *s.v.* Patna.

[2] 'Although the traditional details of the constitution and proceedings of the Council are clearly unhistorical, the fact of its meeting may be accepted without hesitation. If it had been called together before the thirty-second year of his reign, in which the emperor published the "Seven Pillar Edicts," recording his retrospect of the measures taken for the promotion of piety, the Council would almost certainly have been mentioned in those documents. But they are silent on the subject, and the fair inference is that the Council was held at a date subsequent to their publication, that is to say, between B.C. 242 and 231.'—V. A. Smith, in *ERE*, ii. p. 126a. 232–31 B.C. is the probable year of the death of Aśoka, cp. *infra*, p. 456 ff.

confined to the *Sthaviras*, or elders, who adhered to the older and stricter form of doctrine, of which the later developments became known as the *hīnayāna* system.

According to the received account the holding of this later Council was foretold by the monks at Vaiśālī, who indicated that after one hundred and eighteen years, in the time of a great Buddhist king Aśoka reigning at Pātaliputra, there would arise a renowned leader within the Order, by name Tissa Moggaliputta, who would be instrumental in the uprooting and destruction of all false doctrine. In due time at his instance the monks to the number of a thousand, or as otherwise stated sixty thousand, were convoked in council, and condemnation passed on all innovations and heresies. Thus the aim of the conservative and orthodox party was completely attained, and their views ratified by royal authority.

These accounts are clearly one-sided, and would seem to have been written in the interests of a particular school, who regarded themselves and desired to be regarded by others as the true representatives of primitive orthodox Buddhism. The real doctrinal importance however of the Council is small. Its significance lies in its connection with the Buddhist king, the greatest of Indian sovereigns previous to the days of the Mughal Emperors; and in the systematic propaganda of Buddhist doctrines which it is asserted to have undertaken, initiating a large and comprehensive scheme of missionary enterprise under royal patronage, personally conducted in Ceylon, if the tradition may be trusted, by the son of the king.

Significance of the Patna Council

The limits of the Empire of Aśoka, grandson of C'andragupta, the founder of the Maurya Dynasty, under whom Buddhism became the religion of the State, it is not possible to determine with absolute precision. He certainly reigned however over the greater part of the country lying between the Himālaya and the Vindhya mountains on the north and south, the Indus and the Bay of Bengal on the west and east; and there is reason to believe that his influence, if not his direct authority, extended considerably to the west and south of these boundaries. He succeeded his father Bindusāra on the throne in the year 273–72 B.C., but his *abhisheka*, or 'anointing,' the formal inauguration of his reign, was deferred for three or four years[1]; and the Patna Council, if the inference from the silence of the Royal Edicts is justifiable, did not take place until more than a quarter of a century later.

Aśoka

In his early years and possibly for some time after the beginning of his reign Aśoka remained a Hindu. The date of his conversion to Buddhism is uncertain. In his later proclamations however, with characteristic Buddhist tenderness to life, he laments that

[1] According to the Ceylon chronicle, the Mahāvaṁsa, this event took place 218 years after the *Parinirvāṇa*, and in Aśoka's fourth year. See *ERE*, i. *s.v.* abhiṣeka; Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, p. xxiii. ff. It cannot be said that the year of the accession of Aśoka is exactly determined. The date in the text is that given by V. A. Smith, *ERE*, *s.v.* Aśoka; cp. J. R. Fleet in *JRAS*, 1909, p. 1 f. In a discussion of the order and dates of certain kings of Ceylon, M. de Z. Wickremasinghe infers that he came to the throne in 269 B.C., and the formal consecration would therefore have taken place in 265 B.C. All the Sinhalese accounts agree in the interval between this event and the death of Gautama Buddha. Aśoka's father is stated to have reigned for twenty-eight years, and his grandfather Chandragupta twenty-four years. *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, i. p. 142 f.

his career of conquest had been attended with so much inevitable suffering and death; and he endeavoured to restrict as far as possible the slaughter of animals even for food. The earnestness and sincerity of the king are manifest in the text of his Edicts. After his conversion he became a most generous patron of the monastic order, supporting according to the tradition 64,000 monks; to Hindu and other ascetics he also made liberal grants. Later in life, after the death of his wife, he was himself received into the Order by formal ordination; but appears nevertheless to have retained his authority, and continued to direct the affairs of his kingdom. After a long and eminently prosperous reign Aśoka died *circa* 230 B.C.[1] It is not easy at this distance of time to estimate the value of the work which he did for Buddhism. The title commonly given to him of the 'Buddhist Constantine' indicates the character and importance of the position which it is felt he occupies in the history of the Buddhist religion. Until his reign Buddhism was apparently confined to a comparatively restricted area in and about Magadha, and was perhaps little more than one of many sects of an all-embracing Hinduism. He gave it predominant influence and prestige. And by his zealous missionary endeavours, his direct inculcation of its principles, and by the example of his own life and practice, won respect and adherence to Buddhist teaching not only throughout the Indian peninsula from the north almost to the extreme south, but beyond its borders. As far as the available evidence enables us to form a judgement, it was Aśoka who raised Buddhism from a narrow local

[1] V. A. Smith, *Aśoka*[2], Oxford, 1909; *ERE*, ii. *s.v.*; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, London, 1903, ch. xv.

sectarian faith to the position of a world-wide religion.

Apart from the traditions contained in the native chronicles, direct evidence of Aśoka himself has been preserved in the numerous edicts which he caused to be engraved on rocks and pillars throughout his great empire. Of these memorials of his thoughts and will the king is said to have erected 84,000, and nearly forty in different recensions have been discovered at widely distant places from north of Peshāwar to within a few miles of the coast-line in Orissa, and south in Kāthiāwār and the Central Provinces.[1] They are dated in some instances by the years of the king's reign, and appear to have been issued at intervals until within a short time of his death. Moreover the same edict is found repeated in different places, and it is then a fair inference that these were promulgated or engraved at or about the same period. The subjects with which the edicts are concerned are usually quite general. They enjoin virtue and gentleness, kind treatment of men and animals; urge upon all the duty of moral behaviour and toleration of other religions, the adherents of which are to be won by persuasion not by violence; appoint overseers or censors of public morals, and missionaries to propagate the true faith in foreign countries; and finally contrast the peace and prosperity of the present reign with the ignorance and unrest of former times. It is of interest also to note that the earliest direct injunction of *ahiṁsā* that is known is contained in these edicts.[2]

Edicts

[1] V. A. Smith reckons thirty-five; *ERE*, ii. p. 26a.

[2] Jolly, *Recht u. Sitte*, Strassburg, 1896, p. 158; V. A. Smith, *Asoka*, p. 114 ff.

One edict only is formally addressed to the Order of the monks, and makes explicit mention of the Buddha and the Law. Since the same edict gives the names of certain religious books which the king desires should be read by both monks and nuns, it follows that there was already in existence as early as Aśoka's time something of the nature of a recognised body of canonical writings. The titles given have been identified for the most part with passages in extant works of the Canon.[1] Apart from this edict, which is usually considered to be the latest of the series, the phraseology and distinctive terms of the Buddhist books are conspicuous by their absence.

The Edicts of Aśoka are of greater importance from the point of view of history and palaeography than from that of religion. Fourteen rock inscriptions are known, seventeen in caves, and ten inscribed pillars including the two discovered in the Tarai (*supra*, p. 438 f.), and an inscription more recently found at Sārnāth. The chronological order in which these edicts were issued is quite uncertain, the only guide being the occasional dating by the year of the king's reign. It is generally assumed however that the pillar edicts, and those distinctively Buddhist in tone, are later than the rest; and that where several occur on one and the same stone, the order in which they are engraved corresponds to the order of promulgation. The following are the districts or places in which they have been found.

At Shāhbāzgarhī and Mānsāhra in the extreme north of the Panjāb. These are engraved in a northern character, the so-called Kharoshthī, Bactrian or Bactro-Pālī, 'ass' lips,' which is written from right to left, and has been derived from a late form of a north-eastern Semitic alphabet. The remaining inscriptions are in the character known as Brāhmī, the Southern or Indian Pāli, sometimes Maurya from its use by the Maurya kings. The latter form of script appears to have been employed all over India; while the Kharoshthī

[1] The references will be found, *e.g.*, in V. A. Smith, *Asoka*, p. 143; Rhys Davids, *Dialogues*, p. xiii. f.; Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, p. lxiii.

entered the country later, and was confined to the north-west and the Panjāb. This Brāhmī alphabet also has its origin in an ancient north Semitic form of alphabet.[1]

At Kālsī, on the Jumna, eighteen miles north-west of the hill-station of Mussoorie.

Sopāra, a few miles north of Bombay; a mere fragment.

Girnār, in Kāthiāwār.

At Dhauli and Jaugada, in the east coast districts of Cuttack and Ganjam respectively. Two special edicts not found elsewhere are here recorded.

The fourteen rock edicts are therefore known in a more or less complete form from these seven widely-distant regions. There are also two so-called minor rock edicts, of which three and four copies respectively exist.

At Bairāt in Rājputāna, about forty miles north-east of Jaipur.

Rūpnāth, thirty-five miles north of Jabalpur.

Sahasarām, or Sahasrām, in the Shāhābād District of Bengal, seventy miles east-south-east of Benares.

Siddāpura, in Mysore.

The Bhābra edict was found near Bairāt in Rājputāna in 1837. It is inscribed on a rough boulder, now in the Calcutta museum. This is the inscription referred to above, which is couched in

[1] The standard authority on the ancient Indian writing is G. Bühler's *Indische Palaeographie*, published at Strassburg in 1896, with elaborate tables of the various alphabetic forms. A convenient English summary will be found in No. III. of the same author's Indian Studies, *On the Origin of the Indian Brāhma Alphabet*, Vienna, 1895; 2nd ed., Strassburg, 1898. Dr. Bühler's conclusions are generally accepted. They have not however passed uncontested, and a native origin has been claimed for the ancient Indian alphabet; see R. Shamasastry, *Origin of the Devanagari Alphabet*, in *IA*, xxxv. pp. 253, 270, 311, Cp. S. Levi, *ib.* xxxiii. pp. 79 ff., xxxv. p. 1 ff.; Francke and Pischel, *ib.* xxxiv. pp. 21 ff., 41 ff.; Wackernagel, *Altind. Gram.*, p. lvii. f.

Buddhist phraseology. The following is Mr. Smith's rendering :—

> King Piyadasi sends greeting to the Magadhan clergy, and wishes them prosperity and good health.
>
> Ye know, Reverend Sirs, how great is my respect for and devotion to the Buddha, the Law, and the Assembly of the Clergy.
>
> Reverend Sirs, all that has been said by the Venerable Buddha has been well said, and yet, Reverend Sirs, so far as I may give instructions on my own account, I venture to adduce the word of the Buddha, to wit, ' Thus the Good Law will long endure.'[1]
>
> Reverend Sirs, these passages of the Law (a list of seven is given) were uttered by the Venerable Buddha ; and I desire that many monks and nuns should frequently listen to these passages and meditate upon them, and that the laity, male and female, should do the same.
>
> For this reason, Reverend Sirs, I have caused this to be written, so that people may know my wishes.[2]

The three cave inscriptions are brief grants of caves for dwelling-places to Ājīvika ascetics, dated in the thirteenth and twentieth years of the king's reign.[3]

The pillar edicts are two in the Nepalese tarai, at Niglīva and Rummindei (*supra*, p. 438 f.), three in the Champāran District of North Bengal, two now standing at Delhi but removed from their original positions at Meerut and Topra, and the remaining

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[1] Dr. Hultzsch translates :—But, Sirs, what would appear to me (to be referred to by the words of scripture) : ' Thus the true religion will be of long duration ' that I feel bound to declare. *JRAS*, 1909, p. 727 ; cp. on the Bhābra edict, E. Hardy, *ib.* pp. 492, 853 f.

[2] V. A. Smith, *Asoka*, p. 142 f.

[3] On the Ājīvikas see especially A. F. R. Hoernle in *ERE*, i. *s.v.* They were a sect closely related in origin and manner of life to the Jainas, who in course of time, according to Dr. Hoernle, gave rise to and became identical with the Digambara sect (*infra*, p. 602 ff).

three at Sāñchi, Sārnāth, and Allahābād respectively; the last has been removed probably from Kauśāmbī.

At Shāhbāzgarhī, Khālsi, and Girnār, the series of fourteen edicts is complete, but the texts are not in all cases precisely identical. They are dated between the eleventh and fourteenth years of the king's reign. It does not however necessarily follow that all were engraved at the same time. The mention of 'Antiochus king of the Yāvanas' and other Greek kings occurs in the last edict but one of the Girnār stone, and the corresponding texts.[1]

Council of Kanishka

The fourth great Buddhist Council met after an interval of three hundred years under the Indo-Scythian king Kanishka, whose name and influence for Northern Buddhism are as significant as those of Aśoka for the South. The period between the two reigns is filled in for the North by vague traditions which admit of only the most general conclusion on the tendency and movement of religious thought. It was clearly however a time of great activity and success, both in the propagation of the faith and the discussion and formulating of doctrine. Apparently a crisis was reached in the reign of Kanishka, and the Council with which his name is inseparably connected was summoned

[1] In V. A. Smith, *Asoka*[2], 1909, chh. iv–vi., a complete list of the king's monuments is given, with translations. An original description is there quoted of the process of removal of the Delhi pillar from Topra. On the Shāhbāzgarhī edict, see G. A. Grierson in *JRAS*, 1904, p. 725 ff.; on the Third Rock Edict, J. F. Fleet, *ib.*, 1908, p. 811 ff., and on the Mysore copies of the edicts, *id.* 1909, p. 981 ff. There is a note on the Rūpnāth edict, and a new translation by E. Hultzsch, *ib.*, 1909, p. 728 f. References to older discussions will be found in V. A. Smith, *op. cit.*; cp. also an article by the same writer on the title Piyadasi and the authorship of the inscriptions in *JRAS*, 1901, pp. 481 ff., 827 ff. A separate edition of the edicts in English, with introduction and notes etc., has also been published by Mr. Smith (1909).

in order to effect a settlement, and to lay down rules for future guidance.

The date of Kanishka's birth is said by the native authorities to have been four hundred years after the death of the Buddha. Other accounts give the same date for his accession to the throne. From this last-named date in all probability was reckoned the S'aka or Indo-Scythian era, widely employed throughout India in the early centuries. Modern research has thrown much light on the history and chronology of the early centuries in India. It cannot be said however that with regard to Kanishka himself any certain agreement has been reached.

On the much disputed date of Kanishka, and of the era which he is supposed to have founded, see J. F. Fleet in *JRAS*, 1907, p. 1048 f., 1908, p. 177; cp. a note by F. W. Thomas, *ib.*, 1909, p. 465 f., on an inscription of Kanishka, which seems to prove that he dated events by the years of his reign. Dr. Fleet places the accession of the king in the year 58 B.C.; cp. O. Francke, *Ind. Antiq.*, XXXV. (1906), p. 33 ff., an abstract (translation) of an article originally published in 1904 in the *Proc. Royal Academy of Sciences of Prussia*, who argues from Chinese sources that the date of Kanishka 'must be placed appreciably before B.C. 2,' and identifies the era which he established with the so-called Vikrama era, which 'began in India with the year 56–57' B.C.; M. A. Stein, *ib.*, 1905, p. 73 ff.; E. J. Rapson, *JRAS*, 1904, p. 373 f. Kanishka was the greatest ruler of the Kushān dynasty, whose dominions extended from his capital at Peshāwar over parts of Afghānistān, the whole of the Panjāb and Kashmīr, and probably to a considerable distance east and south. Legge, *Fā-Hien*, p. 33 f., quotes the prophecy of the Buddha concerning the coming of Kanishka; Beal, *Siyuki*, i. pp. 56 and note, 151–156. A date a century later is preferred by V. A. Smith, who determines the Kushān or Indo-Scythian period to the years 165 B.C. to 320 A.D., the latter being the date of the establishment of the Gupta power. The accession of Kanishka is placed *c.* 125 A.D.; see *JRAS*, 1903, p. 1 ff., or *Early*

History of India, both with chronological tables; *id.*, *ERE*, i. p. 369b, 'the most probable scheme of Indian chronology assigns Kanishka to the period A.D. 120–150'; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, new edition, *Indian Empire*, vol. ii., 1908, pp. 139 f., 289. Earlier references will be found for example in C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India*, London, 1899, p. 21. The question is as difficult and involved as any that concerns the early history of India.

The date of the Council also cannot be definitely fixed. It is perhaps probable that it would meet soon after the beginning of the king's reign, for the decision of outstanding religious questions. According to Hiuen Tsiang the king himself convoked the assembly, desiring to obtain an authoritative settlement of disputes and exposition of the sacred writings. The monks to the number of five hundred under the presidency of Vasumitra came together at Jālandhara, an ancient city which is still of some importance, lying in the district of the same name that borders on Kashmīr on the south. Others say that the Council was held in a monastery in Kashmīr itself.[1]

Of the details of the proceedings of the Council nothing is known. It is in itself probable enough that the motive of the gathering was to compose differences within the Order; and the same inference may be drawn from the traditional accounts of the conclusions that were reached. Since however the monks of Ceylon and of the South generally took no share in the Council, its debates and decisions concerned Northern Buddhism alone. Equally therefore with Aśoka's, although in an opposite sense, the assembly at Jālandhara was sectarian. Three great commentaries, each consisting of

[1] On Jālandhara, see V. A. Smith, *Early History*, p. 223 ff.; Beal, *Siyuki*, i. 167 n., 174 n.; *Imperial Gaz. of India*, *s.v.*

one hundred thousand *ślokas* or verses, were composed or put together in Sanskrit, attached to the three recognised canonical books. These formed the foundation of the later extended Canon of the Northern Buddhists. The Council further accorded its official recognition to eighteen principal sects, who differing in minor points of doctrine and observance were yet allowed to hold in all essentials the true faith. Finally the assembly made provision for the writing down and preservation of the sacred books.

SACRED BOOKS

Buddhist Canon

THE sacred canonical works of the Buddhists of the Southern School, including Ceylon Burma and Siam, consist of three collections termed *piṭakas*, or 'baskets,' the complete Canon receiving the name of *Tripiṭaka*, or 'triple basket.' This title does not however find recognition within the books themselves but is first met with in the Ceylon chronicles, where it is apparently adopted as a convenient name to designate the canonical in distinction from later uncanonical works which deal with similar subjects, or from the commentaries on the sacred text. These sacred books are written in *Pāli*, a language closely allied to Sanskrit, and in the character of each of the countries in which the Buddhist faith prevails. This practice, as far as the form of the writing is concerned, is in accordance with the directions said to have been given by the Buddha himself, that in every land his teaching should

be made known in the vernacular of the people.[1] Undoubtedly the injunction was intended to have a direct reference to the practice of the Brāhmans, and to be contrasted with it in a polemical sense; who jealously secluded their sacred books from the knowledge of the common people under the seal and secrecy of a dead language.

The original home of the Pāli, whence it was carried to Ceylon, remains uncertain. The language is at any rate distinct from Māgadhī, the dialect of Magadha or the sacred land of Buddhism, although it is said to contain 'Māgadhisms,' idioms or terms adopted from that dialect. On the strength mainly of resemblances in the Khandgiri inscription, H. Oldenberg and others have identified Pāli with the original dialect of Kalinga, the strip of country lying on the east coast between Cuttack and Madras.[2] In later times the vocabulary of the language became largely intermixed with Sinhalese words. In recent years there has been a revival of interest in Pāli studies among the better educated of the Buddhist priests themselves; due however almost entirely to the inspiration and direction of Western scholars. To the great majority of the monks it remains, and is likely to remain, an unknown tongue. In this respect a striking contrast therefore is presented to the zeal with which the Brāhmans have always prosecuted the study of Sanskrit.

The Pāli *Tripitaka* which forms the Canon of the

[1] *C'ullav.*, v. 33. 1. 'You are not, O monks, to put the word of the Buddhas into (Sanskrit) verse. Whosoever does so shall be guilty of an offence. I allow you, O monks, to learn the word of the Buddhas each in his own dialect.' *SBE*, xx. p. 151.

[2] Cp. Kern, p. 7 f., notes and references; E. Müller, *Pāli Grammar*, London, 1884, p. iii. ff.; *Encycl. Brit.*[11], *s.v.*

Buddhists of the South is divided into three parts, namely (1) the *Vinaya* or discipline Piṭaka, treating of the rules and regulations for the life and behaviour of the Buddhist monks, together with professedly historical details of the time and circumstances under which each rule was promulgated; (2) the *Sūtra* Piṭaka, the Piṭaka of doctrine or discourse, containing the statement of Buddhist faith and theology, accompanied by philosophical theories and speculations, all in the form of sermons put into the mouth of the Buddha himself; (3) the *Abhidharma* Piṭaka, which consists of supplementary treatises dealing with controverted points of doctrine and practice, enlarging upon and making additions to the earlier Piṭakas. Of this last the subject-matter is not really different from that of the Sūtra Piṭaka. It repeats and comments upon the doctrines already set forth, but adds little to them; and is rather a scholastic exposition and analysis of existing teaching than an original contribution to knowledge. More exact acquaintance with its contents has disproved the idea for a long time prevalent that the third Piṭaka was specifically philosophical or metaphysical in character. It is certainly later in composition and date than the other two. By its especial supporters, moreover, an attempt was made to give it a position superior to these, as though it inculcated a higher or more difficult degree of virtue; and its title was explained to mean 'superior' or 'advanced' dharma, a law or rule of life going beyond the earlier law.[1]

Tripiṭaka

[1] The prefix *abhi* in composition in Sanskrit words carries with it sometimes an intensive force, *e.g. abhinava*, 'very new.' In the case of *abhidharma* it perhaps connotes simply exposition of or comment upon the dharma.

All three Piṭakas are characterised by what appears to an Occidental student to be wearisome repetition, phrases and whole paragraphs recurring *verbatim* or with slight variation; the intention was to aid the memory, and secure accuracy, at a time when none of the books had been committed to writing[1]. The first Piṭaka has been printed and edited in full by Dr. H. Oldenberg, and the greater part is available in the translations of the Sacred Books of the East.[2] The complete Tripiṭaka also, with the exception of a few minor treatises, has been issued at Rangoon under the inspiration, and at the cost of the late king of Siam in thirty-nine volumes, printed in the Siamese character.

Vinaya Piṭaka

The Vinaya Piṭaka is composed of four or five books or divisions, of which the first is termed the *Sutta-Vibhaṅga*, and deals with offences against the monastic Order. It is subdivided into *Pārājika*, or offences which are followed by excommunication; and *Pāćittiya*, or offences needing expiation and forgiveness. There follows the *Mahāvagga* and *C'ullavagga*, or great and little sections, collectively named *Khandhakas*, containing elaborate directions for the regulating of the lives of the monks and nuns. Lastly there is the *Parivāra-pāṭha*, a dependent or

[1] Prof. T. W. Rhys Davids' comparative estimate of the length of the Pāli Scriptures gives the result that apart from the repetitions 'the Buddhist Bible is probably even shorter than ours.' Including these it is stated to contain nearly twice as many words as the Old and New Testaments together, and in translation to be about four times as long *Buddhism* (1910), p. 20 f. and note 2; cp. *id.*, *SBE*, vol. xxxv p. xxxvii.

[2] *Vinaya Piṭakam*, edited in Pāli by H. Oldenberg, 5 vols. 8vo., 1879–83; *SBE*, vols. xiii., xvii., xx.

supplementary text or treatise, of later date and less importance than the others.

The Sūtra, or in Pāli Sutta Piṭaka, consists of five *Nikāyas*, or collections, the last of which is again sub-divided into fifteen treatises. In the Northern School of Buddhism these are also termed *Āgamas*. The *Dhammapada*, verses or sentences of the law, the second of these treatises, is perhaps the best known of Buddhist sacred texts, and has been often translated.[1] The third Piṭaka is divided into seven books, treating of very various subjects, among which the causes and nature of existence hold a considerable place.

Sūtra and Abhidharma Piṭakas

The following is a complete list of the Pāli canonical Scriptures, in three Piṭakas.

Vinaya-Piṭaka :

1. Sutta-Vibhaṅga { Pārājika. / Pāćittiya.
2. Mahāvagga.
3. C'ullavagga.
4. Parivāra-pātha.

Sutta-Piṭaka :

1. Dīgha-nikāya, a collection of thirty-four 'long' suttas or verses ; translated by Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, 1899.
2. Majjhima-nikāya, one hundred and fifty-two 'middle' suttas.
3. Saṁyutta-nikāya, a collection of 'joined' suttas.
4. Aṅguttara-nikāya, a miscellaneous collection.
5. Khuddaka-nikāya, or collection of short treatises,

[1] By S. Beal, A. Weber, K. J. Saunders, and others ; Max Müller's rendering will be found in *SBE*, vol. x.[2], 1898. The meaning of the name, and the precise significance attached to it by the native commentators themselves, is curiously uncertain. It has been rendered Path of the Law, or of Virtue, Foundation of the Law, Footsteps or Vestiges of Religion, or more freely Religious Sentences. See Max Müller, *l.c.* pp. x., liii. ff. A Latin translation also is given in V. Fausböll's edition of the Pāli text, reprinted London, 1900 ; cp. *infra*, p. 481.

sub-divided into :—(1) Khuddaka-pātha ; (2) Dhammapada ; (3) Udāna, eighty-two suttas of praise, with explanations of historical circumstance ; (4) Itivuttaka, a hundred and ten stories or reports of sayings of the Buddha ; (5) Sutta-nipāta, a collection of seventy-one brief philosophical and ethical tracts, translated by V. Fausböll in *SBE*, vol. x.[2] ; (6) Vimāna-vatthu, stories of the celestial mansions ; (7) Peta-vatthu, stories of pretas, or disembodied spirits ; (8) Thera-gāthā, songs of monks ; (9) Therī-gāthā, songs of nuns ; the Pāli text of (8) and (9) was edited by H. Oldenberg and R. Pischel, London, 1893, and a rendering of the latter by Mrs. Rhys Davids published in 1909 under the title of ' Psalms of the Early Buddhists ' ; (10) Jātaka, five hundred and fifty birth-stories of the Buddha ; a complete translation of these in six volumes has been published at the Cambridge University Press under the superintendence of the late Prof. E. B. Cowell, 1895-1907 ; (11) Niddesa, commentary on part of the Sutta-nipāta, ascribed to Sāriputta ; (12) Patisambhidā-magga, the road to insight or discernment ; (13) Apadāna, legends of saints, translated into French by L. Feer, Paris, 1891 ; the life histories are given of no less than five hundred and ninety monks and nuns contemporary with Gautama Buddha, cp. *ERE*, *s.v.* i. p. 603 ; (14) Buddhavaṁsa, history of twenty-five Buddhas, including Gautama ; (15) C'ariyā-piṭaka, basket of conduct, on the virtues and merit of the Budhha in former births.

Abhidhamma-Piṭaka :

1. Dhamma-saṅgani, conditions of life in various worlds, translated with introduction and notes by Mrs. Rhys Davids under the title of ' A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics,' London, 1900 ; the work is ascribed by the translator to the early part of the fourth century B.C.

2. Vibhaṅga, eighteen tracts on various subjects.

3. Kathā-vatthu-pakarana, a thousand suttas on points open to discussion ; published by A. C. Taylor for the Pāli Text Society.

4. Puggala-paññatti, regulations touching personal character and behaviour.

5. Dhātu-kathā, account of the elements or primary substances.

6. Yamaka, pairs, that is contrasts or oppositions.

7. Patthāna-pakarana, book of causes or origins, that is the causes of existence.

It will be noticed that many of the titles refer rather to the form than the contents of the treatises. The Siamese edition contains the complete text of the Tripiṭaka except Nos. 6–10, 13–15 inclusive of the Khuddaka-nikāya. See Warren, p. xviii. note. Cp. Max Müller, *Sel. Essays*, London, 1881, vol. ii. p. 177 ff., and on the Buddhist literature especially M. Winternitz, *Gesch. d. Indischen Litteratur*, ii. 1, Leipziz, 1913.

The contents of the Jātaka are of much interest from the point of view of folk-lore, independently of their relation to Buddhism and the Buddha. Many of the stories are of great **Jātaka** antiquity, and in a more or less modified or even in some instances more original form have found their way over a large part of Asia and Europe, and are familiar in modern collections of tales. They are for the most part fables or stories in the manner of Aesop, which have been pressed into the service of Buddhist instruction, and made to serve a didactic purpose, in which Gautama himself in his former births takes the principal place, and expounds the moral of the tale. In their non-Buddhist form the part of the Buddha is omitted, and the stories remain as mere moral apologues, in which animals speak and act in a fairy world of imagination. The well-known Syriac collection of stories, for example, which bears the title of *Kalīlah and Dimnah*, may be traced back ultimately in large part to the Jātaka. The work is first known as a translation from an Indian source made about the end of the sixth century of our era, either directly from the Sanskrit or other Indian tongue, or more probably, according to the late Dr. Wright, from a Persani or Pahlavi version.[1] Two centuries

[1] W. Wright, *Syriac Literature*, London, 1894, pp. 124, 239 f.; curiously enough, the name of the translator is given as Bodh, *i.e.* Buddha.

later the same work was translated independently from the Pahlavi into Arabic; and of this latter version renderings were again made into Syriac, Persian, Greek, and other languages. Dr. Wright dates this second Syriac version to the tenth or eleventh century. The names Kalīlah and Dimnah however, in the Syriac *Kalīlagh* and *Damnagh*, are corruptions of the Sanskrit *Karaṭaka* and *Damanaka*, the names of the two jackals who play the principal part as interlocutors in the Indian tales of the Pañćatantra, the widely known and popular text-book of Indian social wisdom, which has been translated into most of the Indian vernaculars. In their Sanskrit form the stories are adapted to Brāhman modes of thought, and made to subserve their doctrinal and religious ends. But though thus slightly disguised they are in large part identical with the stories of the Jātaka, and bear testimony to a common origin.

Barlaam and Josaphat

Thus tales which are ultimately traceable to an Indian and Buddhist source obtained wide currency in the West, and became part of the common heritage of Persian and thence of European folk-lore. Stranger still however, the Buddha himself plays a part by name in one of the best known of the legends of the Christian Church, and has found a place in the roll of saints, both of the Greek and Roman Churches, with a special day dedicated to his memory. In the Menology of the former, August 26 is the commemoration of St. Josaphat;[1] in the latter, November 27 is set apart to the joint honour of Saints Barlaam and Josaphat. Relics of St. Josaphat in the form of a

[1] μνήμη τοῦ ὁσίου Ἰωάσαφ υἱοῦ Ἀβενὴρ τοῦ βασιλέως. J. Jacobs, *Barlaam and Josaphat*, London, 1896, p. xvi.

bone and part of the spine are said to have been preserved in a church at Antwerp since the seventh century; and a church or churches elsewhere bear his name. There is little doubt that the name Josaphat, Ιωασαφ, is merely a corrupted form of *Bodhisattva,* which through the ancient Persian found its way into Arabic in the form Budasaph, which then by a confusion of *b* and *y*, letters that only differ by the diacritical point, became Yodasaph, and ultimately Yoasaph, or Joasaph.

The outline of the legend is as follows, but variations in detail are numerous in the different versions. Josaphat is the son of a great Indian king, named Abenner; of whom it is prophesied before his birth that he will be pre-eminent in power, and deserting the religion of his fathers will turn to the true faith. In order to avert this consummation the king secludes his son in a beautiful palace, that he may not come to a knowledge of death or disease. When the prince however reaches man's estate he becomes impatient of constraint, and with his father's hardly-won permission goes forth from the palace, to meet in succession a blind man, a leper, a man aged and infirm, and a corpse; and he learns to his distress that this is the common lot of all mankind. He is told that only the hermits, who have renounced the world, know the secret of escape from these woes, and he desires to see them and to learn their wisdom. Disguised as a jewel merchant a hermit of wide repute for learning and holiness of life, named Barlaam, is introduced to the court, and in interviews with the prince convinces him of the truth, and the latter expresses his determination to become Barlaam's disciple. The king, his father, however, is very angry, and endeavours to arrest Barlaam, but finds that he has escaped; and a mock discussion is arranged, to be held before the prince, in which a stranger, Nachor, is to play the part of advocate of the new doctrine, and to be overcome in argument; thus it is hoped to discredit the doctrine in the eyes of Josaphat, and induce him to abandon his resolve to follow Barlaam. The attempt however fails; for Nachor, having been secretly threatened beforehand by the prince with death if he fails to vindicate the truth, delivers an eloquent apology for the faith, by which his opponents

are convicted and put to shame.[1] A further attempt to lead the prince astray by means of worldly and sensual temptations, in which a magician, Theudas, plays the part of evil counsellor to the king, meets with as little success. In the final issue Theudas is converted, and the prince forsaking his home devotes himself to an ascetic life in the wilderness with Barlaam as his companion and friend.

Many of the details in the Arabic and other versions are more strikingly Buddhist; but the resemblance in any case is sufficiently close to leave no doubt as to the source of the story. The name Barlaam is itself traceable back to an Indian and Sanskrit original through the Syriac, from a form Balauvar=Bhagavān, by interchange of *g* and *l*, *n* and *r*, pairs of letters the forms of which are similar and easily confused in Pahlavi.[2] Barlaam therefore

[1] The Apology is not original in the legend, but the writer has adopted, and put into the mouth of Nachor, the early Christian Apology of Aristides, addressed according to Eusebius (*H. E.*, iv. 3) to the Emperor Hadrian (117–138 A.D.), but in the judgement of Dr. Harris, the editor of the Syrian text, belonging more probably to the early years of the reign of his successor Antoninus Pius (138–161 A.D.). The identity of Nachor's speech with the defence of the Christian apologist was established when a manuscript containing the Syriac text of the Apology of Aristides was found in the monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai in 1889. The work of Aristides was believed to have been lost; but the Syriac was at once recognised as practically identical with the Greek which had been long known as forming part of the story of Barlaam and Josaphat. The Greek text is believed to go back to the sixth century of our era; in its Syriac form the speech is expanded by a number of repetitions and added details, but the Greek is probably nearer to the original. By a comparatively late tradition this latter text was ascribed to John of Damascus, who flourished in the first half of the eighth century, and is usually printed among his works (Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, tom. 96). See J. R. Harris, *Apology of Aristides*, Cambridge, 1891.

[2] See J. Jacobs, *Barlaam and Josaphat*, London, 1896, p. xlvii. ff., a most interesting and complete discussion of the legend.

is Lord or Master, a usual title of the Buddha. And the name of Josaphat's guardian or tutor, Zardan, is likewise identified with that of Chandaka, the attendant of Gautama in his flight from his home.

The popularity of the legend in the West is attested by the fact that more than sixty different translations are known, all of which seem to go back through Syriac or Arabic forms to a Pahlavi original, which is believed to have been made from an Indian, probably a Prākrit tongue, in the reign of Chosroes the Great of Persia, 531–579 A.D., between whose character and life and the notices of Abenner, the father of Josaphat, resemblances have been traced. The distinctively Christian elements in the legend are later amplifications and insertions, for which the Greek and Syriac versions are mainly responsible. Three different renderings in Arabic are known; the first version in Greek is assigned to the sixth century; and from the first Latin translation by Anastasius, the Papal librarian in the latter part of the ninth century, the earliest English rendering was produced by W. Caxton, A.D. 1483. There are also extant three versions or paraphrases in English verse.[1]

In his interviews with the prince the disguised hermit, Barlaam, addresses to him a series of stories or parables, thirty-five or thirty-six in number, of which two are of especial interest. That of the Sower follows so closely the lines of the Gospel narrative that its source can hardly be doubted. It is found moreover in the earliest versions, Oriental as well as Greek, and therefore was inserted in the legend at a very early date, perhaps replacing, as Mr. Jacobs suggests, an original Buddhist tale of similar import and teaching. The story of the four caskets is also present in the earliest renderings, and therefore in the original form of the legend.

[1] Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. lxxxix. ff.; cp. also Max Müller, on the 'Migration of Fables,' in *Selected Essays*, London, 1881, vol. i. p. 533 ff.

The king places before his attendants four caskets, two of which are set with gold and precious stones, and two daubed over with clay. In the former are contained dry bones, in the latter pearls and jewels, and the courtiers are required to give judgement on the value of the caskets. They of course pronounce wrongly, and the moral is drawn that a fair outside often conceals an evil heart, while the clay-covered vessels are compared to the hermits in mean raiment, but within full of noble and elevating thoughts. Shakespeare's story of the caskets in the *Merchant of Venice* is derived therefore ultimately from an Indian source, but whether he took it directly from the legend of Barlaam and Josaphat is unknown.

Formation and Growth of Canon

With regard to the date of these writings the Buddhist tradition of the South ascribes the completion of the Sacred Canon to the second great Council, which met at Vaiśālī a century after the death of Gautama Buddha.[1] The last two divisions of the C′ullavagga are occupied with an account of this and of the earlier Council at Rājagṛiha under the presidency of Kāśyapa, with especial reference to the determination of the form and contents of the Scriptures. Accordingly the Vinaya is recounted by Upāli, the Dharma by Ānanda. If this tradition therefore may be accepted as well founded there was recognised within a very short time of Gautama's death an early form of the Canon, consisting of only two parts, the discipline and the doctrine, both of which were equally believed to be the exact utterances of the Master himself, and these were set by his immediate disciples in a framework of the time and circumstances under which they had been delivered. Subsequently the doctrine or law was subdivided into two parts, the Dharma proper and the

[1] *supra*, p. 452 ff.; on the date, cp. *SBE*, x². p. xliii. ff. Geiger, *op. cit.* p. liv. ff.

Abhidharma, and large additions were made.[1] The complete Tripiṭaka appears certainly to have been known in Ceylon by the middle or end of the fourth century of our era. The substance of the doctrine and probably many of the traditions themselves are of much older date; and it is possible that even in their present form the canonical books were practically completed some centuries earlier.[2]

That a real historical growth underlies this traditional account is very probable. Little reliance can of course be placed upon the details of the narrative. But the broad fact of the early existence of a twofold collection of sacred texts, which was subsequently enlarged or developed into the Tripiṭaka or Triple Basket, appears both natural and one likely to be preserved in tradition. In particular, in a sense of a more advanced theorizing or speculation, the Abhidharma was not differentiated from the Dharma. Only later, at a date impossible to determine, was a separation effected, one however which was never logically or completely carried out in the sense that law or doctrine and commentary or speculation stood finally and always apart. This third division received the name of the Abhidharma Piṭaka, and was placed on an equality with the other two.

In the earlier books of the C′ullavagga and in other parts of the Vinaya Piṭaka no mention is made of the heretical views or lax practices which, according to the twelfth book, became the immediate cause of the summoning of the Vaiśālī Council, and which

[1] Cp. Max Müller in *SBE*, x². p. xl. ff.

[2] Cp. Rhys Davids' *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, 1899, Preface; H. Oldenberg, *Vinaya Piṭaka*, Introduction; R. S. Copleston, *Buddhism in Magadha and Ceylon*², ch. xix.; and the references given.

were there formally condemned. The same statement is true of the subject-matter of the eleventh book, the Council at Rājagṛiha. It would appear to follow that these two concluding books or divisions of the C'ullavagga are a later addition,[1] and that whatever the date of their compilation the rest of the Vinaya Piṭaka, with the exception of the undoubtedly more recent Parivāra-pātha, must be regarded as in the main of earlier origin. Further within the Sutta-Vibhaṅga itself three successive strata at least of teaching and comment may be distinguished. There can be traced first an inner or primitive kernel, which consists of a number of rules laid down for the use of the Buddhist monks at their semi-monthly assemblies at new and full moon. These rules concerned the confession of and purification from sin, and in substance at least are not improbably to be ascribed to Gautama himself. At the meetings the offences were recited in order with the regulations bearing upon them, and appeal was then made to the assembled monks voluntarily to confess their wrong-doing, if guilty. Silence was regarded as an assertion of innocence. Comments upon and explanations of these rules were subsequently framed, which were recited together with them, and came to form part of the same collection. Finally new additions were made, further explanations offered, and the usual historical framework invented, which detailed for each rule or precept the circumstances under which it was first promulgated by the

[1] A curious confirmation of this inference is that if these books are taken away the C'ullavagga would be really, as its name imports, a 'little' section, as compared with the Mahāvagga. The former contains in its present form twelve Khaṇḍakas or divisions, against the ten of the latter. But the Mahāvagga has slightly the advantage in actual length.

Buddha. The result was the Sutta-Vibhaṅga as it now exists with its twofold classification of offences.

This nucleus of rules however is extant as a separate work known as the *Pātimokkha*, or in Sanskrit *Pratimoksha*, meaning 'release' or 'deliverance,' that is from the guilt of offences.[1] This work is justly regarded as in substance the oldest Buddhist law-book in existence, and if any of the laws and regulations of the Order are to be traced back to Gautama Buddha himself, about which more scepticism has been expressed than is perhaps justified, they are to be found here. It is not easy, however, to account for the further fact that although the Pātimokkha is thus embodied in the Sutta-Vibhaṅga, it is not in its separate form considered by the Buddhists to be a canonical work.[2]

Pātimokkha

[1] The precise significance of the term again is doubtful, or at least is disputed. See *SBE*, xiii. p. xxvii. f.; Kern, p. 74 n. The latter scholar denies that the word can convey the meaning above given, and would substitute the idea of a protective charm, 'something serving as a (spiritual) cuirass.' To the Hindu *moksha* is deliverance from re-birth, from the incessant round of the *saṁsāra*; see above, p. 289 f. The Pāli text was edited and translated by J. F. Dickson in 1875; W. W. Rockhill published a French translation from the Tibetan in 1884.

[2] The Pātimokkha has been translated into English by Profs. T. W. Rhys Davids and H. Oldenberg in *SBE*, vol. xiii. The directions for its recitation are given *Mahāv.* ii. 4:

At that time the monks, considering that the Pātimokkha recitation had been instituted by the Blessed One, recited the Pātimokkha every day.

They told this thing to the Blessed One.

'The Pātimokkha, O monks, is not to be recited every day. He who recites it (every day) commits a serious offence. I ordain, O monks, to recite the Pātimokkha on the Uposatha day' (*i.e.* at the fast-day service).

At that time the monks, considering that it had been prescribed by the Blessed One to recite the Pātimokkha on the

Mahāvagga: C'ullavagga

The Mahāvagga and the C'ullavagga appear to have been gradually built up on much the same plan as the Sutta-Vibhaṅga. A nucleus of dogmatic rule and instruction intended for the Order has received enlargement with details historical and explanatory. The component parts are not however in this case so readily discernible; nor has any portion of the Khaṇḍakas, with slight exceptions, been preserved as a separate work. Beyond the fact therefore that the last two chapters of the C'ullavagga are of later origin, little or nothing can with any confidence be affirmed concerning their date or age. The Parivārapātha however, which consists largely of repetitions of laws and teaching found in the earlier books, undoubtedly belongs to a considerably later period, and has been supposed to have come into existence in Ceylon.

Dhammapada

Upon the time and place of origin of the remaining piṭakas it is even more difficult to form a reliable judgement. With regard to the Dhammapada especially, the most interesting and important part of the Sutta-Piṭaka, a knowledge of its age and history would throw welcome light upon the development of the ethics of Buddhism. None of these works contain within themselves materials for definite conclusions as to the time of their composition;

Uposatha day, recited the Pātimokkha three times each half-month, on the fourteenth, fifteenth, and eighth day of each half-month.

They told this thing to the Blessed One.

'The Pātimokkha, O monks, is not to be recited three times each half-month. He who recites it (three times) commits a serious offence. I prescribe, O monks, that you recite the Pātimokkha once each half-month, on the fourteenth or on the fifteenth day.'

nor is any external standard of comparison at present available which would enable them to be ranked in chronological order. Buddhist tradition ascribes to all a monotonous and uniform antiquity. A further fact that must be taken into account in estimating the age of these works is that parts of the piṭakas were early translated into the languages of other Eastern countries into which Buddhism penetrated. Of the Dhammapada, for example, four Chinese renderings or versions are extant, and one in the language of Tibet.[1]

The work is divided into twenty-six chapters, containing 423 verses, of which a considerable number have been traced in others of the canonical books. The titles of the chapters are often suggestive, the way of wrong-doing (*pāpavagga*), the way of the world (*lokavagga*), the way of happiness (*sukhavagga*), the way of thirst or craving (*tanhāvagga*), the way of the monk (*bhikkhuvagga*), the way of the Brāhman (*Brāhmaṇavagga*), etc. The *editio princeps* of the Dhammapada was published by V. Fausböll with Latin translation in 1885, a second edition of which appeared in 1900. The text has frequently been reprinted, *e.g.* at Colombo with a Sinhalese rendering in 1879, and in the Siamese edition (*supra*, p. 468). Translations also have been numerous. That of Dr. Fausböll was the earliest. German translations have been published by Dr. A. Weber in 1860, and by K. E. Neumann, and a French translation by Fernando Hū appeared at Paris in 1878. The most exact and satisfactory English rendering has been published with notes by the late F. Max Müller in *SBE*, vol. x.[2], Oxford, 1898; a more recent and convenient translation is by W. D. C. Wagiswara and K. J. Saunders in 'Wisdom of the East Series,' London, 1912. The precise meaning of the text is sometimes not altogether easy to determine, in part owing to the inherent difficulty of the Buddhist technical terms, and in part to the absence of a controlling context. The oldest Chinese version dates from about the beginning of the third century, and agrees in general with the Pāli, but contains additional sections at the beginning and end. The later Chinese renderings exhibit greater variations, and are frequently mere paraphrase. More

[1] *SBE*, x[2]. p. lviii. ff.

than two-thirds of the Tibetan version is said to be new and independent of the Pāli.[1] With regard to the real date of the composition or compilation of the work, it seems impossible to arrive at any certain conclusion. Buddhaghosha wrote a commentary on it at the beginning of the fifth century of our era; and the book was therefore in existence before that time. Buddhist tradition asserts that having been put together at the Council immediately after the Buddha's death it was first committed to writing in the reign of king Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, 88–76 B.C.[2]

The Dhammapada has usually been considered to be the most typical of Buddhist writings, and it is on the whole the most deserving of study. Its ethical content is of a high order, and its pithy sayings are most striking for their shrewdness and wisdom. The extracts that follow will illustrate its style and the character of its teaching:—

> Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love, this is an old rule.[3]
>
> If you see a man who shows you what is to be avoided, who administers reproofs, and is intelligent, follow that wise man as you would one who tells of hidden treasures; it will be better, not worse, for him who follows him.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Do not have evil-doers for friends, do not have low people for friends; have virtuous people for friends, have for friends the best of men.[4]
>
> If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors.

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[1] *SBE*, x.², p. lviii. ff.

[2] The date is that adopted by Max Müller, *loc. cit.*, p. xlvii.; later investigation seems to prove that it must be regarded as very uncertain. Dr. Geiger gives for this king's broken reign the years 44 and 29–17 B.C.; *Mahāvaṁsa*, pp. xxxiv., xxxvii See also J. F. Fleet, in *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 330, 350, 352.

[3] *Dhammap.*, i. 5; the renderings are those of F. Max Müller.

[4] *ib.*, vi. 76, 78.

One's own self conquered is better than all other people; not even a god, a Gandharva, not Māra with Brahman could change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself, and always lives under restraint.[1]

A man should hasten towards the good, and should keep his thought away from evil; if a man does what is good slothfully, his mind delights in evil.

. . . . . .

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gather it little by little.

Let no man think lightly of good, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good, even if he gather it little by little.[2]

Many men whose shoulders are covered with the yellow gown are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; such evil-doers by their evil deeds go to hell.

. . . . . .

As a grass-blade, if badly grasped, cuts the arm, badly practised asceticism leads to hell.[3]

It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, rushing wherever it listeth; a tamed mind brings happiness.

Let the wise man guard his thoughts, for they are difficult to perceive, very artful, and they rush wherever they list; thoughts well guarded bring happiness.[4]

Look upon the world as you would on a bubble, look upon it as you would on a mirage; the king of death does not see him who thus looks down upon the world.[5]

A man is not just if he carries a matter by violence; no, he who distinguishes both right and wrong, who is learned and

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[1] *Dhammap.*, viii. 103 ff.

[2] *ib.*, ix. 116, 121 f.

[3] *ib.*, xxii. 307, 311.

[4] *ib.*, iii. 35, 36.

[5] *ib.*, xiii. 170.

guides others, not by violence but by the same law, being a guardian of the law and intelligent, he is called just.

A man is not learned because he talks much; he who is patient, free from hatred and fear, he is called learned.

A man is not a supporter of the law because he talks much; even if a man has learnt little, but sees the law bodily, he is a supporter of the law, a man who never neglects the law.

A man is not an elder because his head is grey; his age may be ripe, but he is called 'Old-in-vain.'

He in whom there is truth, virtue, pity, restraint, moderation, he who is free from impurity and is wise, he is called an elder.[1]

A man does not become a Brāhmaṇa by his platted hair, by his family, or by birth; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brāhmaṇa.

What is the use of platted hair, O fool! what of the raiment of goat-skins? Within thee there is ravening, but the outside thou makest clean.

The man who wears dirty raiment, who is emaciated and covered with veins, who meditates alone in the forest, him I call indeed a Brāhmaṇa.

I do not call a man a Brāhmaṇa because of his origin or of his mother. He is indeed arrogant and he is wealthy; but the poor, who is free from all attachments, him I call indeed a Brāhmaṇa.

. . . . . .

Him I call indeed a Brāhmaṇa who calls nothing his own, whether it be before, behind, or between, who is poor, and free from the love of the world.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmaṇa, the manly, the noble, the hero, the great sage, the conqueror, the indifferent, the accomplished, the awakened.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmaṇa who knows his former abodes, who sees heaven and hell, has reached the end of births, is perfect in knowledge, a sage, and whose perfections are all perfect.[2]

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[1] *Dhammap.*, xix. 256 ff.

[2] *ib.*, xxvi. 393 ff., 421 ff.; the whole chapter is interesting, giving the Buddhist conception of a perfect man. Compare the character of the *Muni*, or sage, in *Sutta-Nipāta*, i. 12, *SBE*, x². second part p. 33 ff.

The completed Canon of the three Piṭakas was according to the tradition carried with him into Ceylon by *Mahendra*, or in Pāli *Mahinda*, the son, or according to the statement of Hiuen Tsiang the younger brother of Aśoka, when he journeyed thither after the great Church Council held at Patna.[1] In the king's own records however, while Ceylon is named as one of the countries to which missionaries are to be sent (thirteenth Rock Edict), no reference is made to the king's son or brother, as the agent or missioner of the island. Many reasons might be suggested for the silence of the edict, and this circumstance can hardly be considered to invalidate the tradition. This mission of Mahinda to Ceylon in order to preach the doctrines of the Buddha is said to have been undertaken in consequence of a decision of the Council to send teachers into all the surrounding countries; and by the Buddhists of the island he is regarded as the apostle and first missionary of their faith.

Mahinda and the Canon in Ceylon

If the tradition that Mahinda bore with him to Ceylon copies of all the canonical books is historically reliable, it would follow that the Canon of the Buddhist Scriptures, as recognised and certified by the Southern School, was adopted not later than the middle of the third century before Christ. This is in itself perhaps hardly probable. The evidence for the meeting of the Patna assembly is

[1] Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. pp. 91 ff., 231, 246 f.; cp. V. A. Smith, *Asoka*, pp. 48, 185 ff., and *id.*, *JRAS*, 1901, p. 841; Mr. Smith rejects the whole story of Mahinda and his evangelization of Ceylon as unworthy of belief. The date of Mahinda's arrival in Ceylon is given by W. Geiger as May 16, 246 B.C.; see *Mahāvaṁsa*, p. xxxii. f

not above suspicion, since no mention of the Council is made in the Tripiṭaka. On other grounds also so early a closing of the Southern Canon is unlikely. In addition however to the canonical books Mahinda is said to have carried with him from Magadha at the same time certain Pāli commentaries on the sacred text, which he himself after his arrival in Ceylon translated into Sinhalese. These renderings were subsequently known to Buddhaghosha, the great Buddhist scholar and commentator, at the beginning of the fifth century A.D.; and by him, after the loss of the originals, retranslated into Pāli.[1] The great monastery at Anurādhapura, the *Mahāvihāra*, is said to have been built for Mahinda; and on the rocky mountain of Mihintalé, eight miles to the east, is shown the dāgaba which is believed to contain his ashes, erected on the spot where he met king Tissa. The latter became his convert and royal patron, and at his request a branch of the sacred Bo-Tree was sent from Gayā to Ceylon, and planted at Anurādhapura, where an ancient tree, not impossibly an actual descendant of the original stock, still exists.[2]

The entire Canon is traditionally recorded to have been for the first time committed to writing in Ceylon during the reign of the Buddhist king Vaṭṭagāmaṇi.[3]

[1] Cp. W. Geiger, *Singh. Liter.* p. 2; *Dīp. und Mahāvaṁsa*, p. 76 f.; Rhys Davids, in *JRAS*, 1904, p. 85.

[2] See H. W. Cave, *Ruined Cities of Ceylon*, London, 1900, pp. 41 f., 47, 53 f.; and *passim*; arts. *Anurādhapura* in *ERE*, vol. i. p. 599, and *Ceylon Buddhism*, vol. iii. p. 331; V. A. Smith, *Asoka* (1901), p. 185 ff.; *Mahāvaṁsa*, transl. by W. Geiger, London, 1912, chh. xiii. to xix., and *Introduction*, p. xv. ff.

[3] *supra*, p. 443 and note. The late Dr. G. Bühler believed that the Buddhist Scriptures were known in a written form considerably before this date; see *Indian Studies*, No. III., Vienna, 1895, pp. 11, 87. According to the chronicles Vaṭṭagāmaṇi ruled for a

Portions may have been thus written down at an earlier period; for the art of writing had long been known and practised in India.

Writing of the Sacred Books

It was however employed mainly if not exclusively for brief edicts, letters, deeds of sale or gift, where either a temporary object alone was sought, or absolute permanence was necessary for a state or private record. For longer treatises and the ordinary purposes of literature the memory was considered a safer and more convenient repository than leaves or stones. And in the absence of more appropriate materials for writing those who took this view were undoubtedly right. The impulse to an extensive use of the art of writing is usually given by the invention or introduction of a cheap and suitable material, such as was the papyrus in Egypt and the Western world, the paper of China, or the stiff clay of Babylonia. It is therefore inherently probable that a longer or shorter period of oral transmission preceded the writing down of the sacred books. Such a mode of transmission does not in the East in any way imply great dislocation or corruptness of the text, such as would be suffered at the hands of copyists through a moderately long series of manuscripts.

Commentaries

In addition to the canonical books there exists a large number of commentaries and works on grammar, history, and other subjects, written in Pāli and Sinhalese, the trustworthiness of which it is often difficult to appraise. These are of much

brief and troubled period between fourteen and fifteen years before his actual reign, being then driven out by invaders, and subsequently regaining his kingdom; see J. F. Fleet in *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 330 n. 2, 350, 352, and Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, p. xxxiv. ff.

importance for the right understanding of the interpretation which the Ceylon Buddhists themselves put upon the sacred text. The commentaries on parts of the Tripiṭaka were termed *Atthakathā*, and a semi-authoritative or canonical character was ascribed to them on the ground of their assumed introduction into the island by Mahendra, together with the Piṭakas themselves.

Buddhaghosha

Of these writers of commentaries the most renowned was Buddhaghosha, who has often been called the second founder of Buddhism in Ceylon; and it is probable that no inconsiderable part of the philosophical form into which Southern Buddhism has been cast is due to him. A detailed account of his work is given in the Mahāvaṁsa. His name, the 'sound' or 'voice of the Buddha,' is perhaps only an honorary epithet; if so, his real name is unknown. Born near Buddh Gayā at the beginning of the fifth century, he is said to have displayed great critical ability at an early age. Converted to Buddhism through the instrumentality of a Buddhist monk, Revata, at the instance of the latter he made his way to Ceylon, and settled in Anurādhapura during the reign of king Mahānāma, A.D. 410–432.[1] There he heard the assembled monks in the Mahāvihāra monastery reciting the Atthakathā, and sought permission to translate these commentaries into Pāli. Having given satisfactory proof of his capacity, he was allowed access to the entire collection, and produced a complete rendering

[1] For a discussion of the date of Buddhaghosha, see Max Müller in *SBE*, x.[2] p. xxii. ff.; and cp. Fleet in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 903; Copleston, *Buddhism*[2], chap. xxiv.; *ERE*, vol. ii., *s.v.*; Kern, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 8 f., 125; W. Geiger, *Liter. u. Sprache der Singhalesen*, Strassburg, 1901, p. 2 f.

of all the commentaries from the Sinhalese. Many, if not most of these are still extant in manuscript, and parts have been published. Buddhaghosha was also the author of independent works, of which the most important is the *Visuddhi-magga*, the 'way of purity,' a systematic treatise or compendium of Buddhist doctrine in three parts, on Conduct, Meditation, and Knowledge. This work was so highly esteemed that later writers composed commentaries upon it.[1] Buddhaghosha seems indeed to have given a direction and tone to the religion of Ceylon, which it never lost. After the completion of his work in the island, he is said to have returned to India, and thence according to one form of the tradition to Burma.

> With Buddhaghosha the curtain falls on the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, and does not rise again until the advent of the European Powers many centuries later. It seems probable that the religion suffered decline during the period of the Tamil invasions from the north in the sixth and seventh centuries; to whom are due the overthrow and ruin of the great ecclesiastical buildings at Anurādhapura and elsewhere in the island. The fierce and protracted struggles against a foreign domination gave little opportunity for religious progress or discussion; and the modern Buddhism of the country districts at least perhaps inherits from this age its confused and semi-pagan character. In Colombo and in other of the chief towns there has been a revival of interest within recent times, accompanied by propagandist attempts on the part of the native leaders of thought themselves. The movement however appears to have been in large part suggested and inspired from without; and although on the practical and social side it has achieved a measure of success,

[1] The text of the *Visuddhi-magga* was prepared for the press by the late Mr. H. C. Warren, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and his translation was nearly complete at the time of his death. A complete edition based upon his work is in preparation for the Harvard Oriental Series. See Rhys Davids in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 886.

which commands sympathy and respect, doctrinally it has made little advance.

Another well-known work was the *Milinda-panha*, or Questions of King Milinda. It consists of a series of dialogues between the king and Nāgasena, a Buddhist sage, wherein the former propounds a series of philosophical and metaphysical questions, which are more or less successfully answered by the monk.[1] Milinda, or in Greek Menander, was a well-known Indo-Scythian king who reigned in the latter half of the second century before Christ. His capital was Śākala, the Sāgala of the Buddhist records, known to the Greeks as Sāngala, in the Jhang District, where considerable remains have been found. The work in question bears internal evidence of having originated in the north or north-west of India, and its composition is usually assigned to the early part of the first century of our era. It is based upon the Piṭakas, and presupposes the same characteristics of life and currents of thought as are there found. The *Milinda-panha* is quoted however by Buddhaghosha, and must therefore have been carried to Ceylon and translated into Pāli at a comparatively early period.[2]

Milinda-panha

The two most important works for the ecclesiastical history of Ceylon and of Southern Buddhism generally are the *Dīpavaṁsa*, or Chronicle of the Island, and the *Mahāvaṁsa*, or Great Chronicle. These two compilations, which are supposed to have

[1] Translated by Rhys Davids in *SBE*, vols. xxxv., xxxvi.

[2] *IGI*, *s.v.* Sāngala; Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, vol. i. p. 166 and note 5; C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India*, London, 1899, p. 16 f., with the references there given; V. A. Smith, *Early History of India*[2], p. 211 f. In the year 1880 a coin of Menander was found, strangely enough, at Tenby, in South Wales; V. A. Smith, in *IA*, xxxiv. p. 252.

been put together about the beginning and middle of the fifth century A.D. respectively, deal with the history of Buddhism from its origin, and present many variations in detail from the accounts preserved in the Tripiṭaka. The ancient portion of the *Mahāvaṁsa* includes only one-third of the whole, and breaks off with the thirty-seventh chapter. The work however has been continued by a later author or authors, who have carried the history down to the middle of the eighteenth century. The Mahāvaṁsa in its present form thus consists of one hundred chapters. The whole with the Dīpavaṁsa has preserved a most extensive and interesting store of history and tradition, the parts of which are necessarily of very different value.[1]

Ceylon Chronicles

The canonical books of the Southern Buddhists are recognised, generally speaking, by the adherents of the Northern School in China,[2] Japan, and Tibet, but occupy an entirely subordinate position.

[1] The earlier part of the *Mahāvaṁsa* was translated into English by the late George Turnour, and published in 1837; a reprint appeared at Colombo in 1889, together with a translation of the remainder of the work by L. C. Wijesinha, a native Sinhalese scholar, and a revised critical edition by W. Geiger was published by the Pāli Text Society in 1908. The text was translated by the editor himself into German, and a rendering of the German into English, with Introduction and notes, appeared in 1912 under the title Mahāvaṁsa, or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon. An edition of the Dīpavaṁsa, text and translation, was published by H. Oldenberg, London, 1879. See W. Geiger, *Dīpavaṁsa und Mahāvaṁsa*, Leipzig, 1905; J. F. Fleet, in *JRAS*, 1904, p. 15 ff.

[2] Cp. M. Winternitz, *Gesch. der Indischen Litteratur*, ii. 1, p. 181 ff.; *Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka*, compiled by Bunyiu Nanjio, Oxford, 1883; and on the titles of the Abhidharma of the Northern Canon, J. Takakusu in *JRAS.*, 1905, p. 160 ff.

Northern Canon

The *Mahāyānists* accept the Ceylon Tripitaka, but add to it other works on mythology and metaphysics, which are either written in Sanskrit or more usually are translations or adaptations from the Sanskrit, and to which they attach a greater importance. The Tibetan Canon in particular is most extensive and elaborate. In the belief and regard of the Buddhists of China and Japan the foremost place is taken by three works, which are all of a more popular and mythological character than the authoritative books of the South. These are the Greater and the Less *Sukhāvatī-vyūha*, or 'description of Paradise,' and the *Amitāyur-dhyāna-sūtra*, or 'treatise on meditation on Amitāyus,' or Amitābha, the Buddha of boundless splendour or light. The subject of the three writings is very similar. They all describe with an Oriental wealth of imagery the joys of Sukhāvatī, the heaven of Amitābha; of whom the greater Sukhāvatī-vyūha proceeds to narrate the history, beginning with his appearance in the world as a *Bhikshu*, named Dharmākara. His home is in the west, which is therefore sacred to him :—

> This is the quarter where that Blessed Amitābha, the Tathāgata, holy and fully enlightened, dwells, remains, supports himself, and teaches the Law, whose spotless and pure name, famed in every quarter of the whole world with its ten quarters, the Blessed Buddhas, equal to (the grains of) the sand of the river Gangā, speaking and answering again and again without stopping, extol, praise, and eulogize.[1]

In the smaller Sukhāvatī-vyūha, meditation upon Amitāyus with repetition of his name and prayer appears to be regarded as sufficient for salvation; while the larger book demands in addition works

[1] *Sukh.-vyūha*, 39; *SBE*, xlix. 2nd pt. p. 59.

of merit.[1] According to the tradition, this was one of the last works composed by the Buddha after his return from the Trayastriṁśa heaven, in the eighteenth year of his age.

The *Amitāyur-dhyāna-sūtra* begins with the story of Ajātaśatru, the prince who dethroned his father Bimbisāra, king of Magadha, and shut up his mother Vaidehī in strict confinement, because she brought nourishment to her husband in prison. To her the Buddha reveals himself, and instructs her how to obtain the heaven of Amitābha, which he describes. The Buddha Amitābha then appears in dazzling splendour, and worships the Buddha (*i.e.* Gautama). And the latter explains to Ānanda and Vaidehī the methods of meditating upon Amitābha, and the characters and virtues of those who will be born into that blessed country where he abides.[2]

[1] The Sanskrit text of the Greater and the Less Sukhāvatī-vyūha was published by Max Müller in 1883, in *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, Aryan Series, vol. i. pt. ii.; and translations of the same in *SBE*, vol. xlix. The popularity of the larger work may be inferred from the fact that no fewer than twelve translations are said to have been made into Chinese, of which five are still extant, differing considerably from one another and from the Sanskrit original. The most important and best is that by Saṅghavarman, dated 252 A.D. The smaller Sukhāvatī-vyūha was three times translated. A complete edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka is now in course of publication through the efforts and at the expense of Chinese native scholars, and more than 3,000 volumes have already appeared. The Sukhāvatī-vyūha was known in Japan at least as early as 640 A.D., or within a century of the introduction of Buddhism into the island; and was there studied in the original Sanskrit as well as in Chinese translations. See the Introductions to the works above cited. For the history of the three treatises in Japan see also A. Lloyd, *Creed of Half Japan*, pp. 166 f., 212.

[2] The Sanskrit text of the Amitāyur-dhyāna-sūtra has not, I believe, hitherto been found. A translation by Mr. J. Takakusu from a Chinese version is contained in *SBE*, vol. xlix.; where

A work held in the highest esteem by one sect at least of the Buddhists in Japan is the *Vajraććhedikā*, or Diamond-Cutter, which, in strong contrast to the three treatises already referred to, devotes itself to the exposition of the Indian doctrine of *māyā*. All phenomenal things including the self are unreal; only mind has a true existence; and the objects of sense are all of them illusion. This metaphysical teaching is placed in the mouth of the Buddha himself. The book has by the leaders of Buddhist thought in Japan been accepted as in substance a fair statement of their doctrine and views.[1] Under the same name also it has found a place among the sacred books of the Tibetan Buddhists.

Tibetan Canon

This Tibetan Canon is in mere bulk unequalled by the sacred scriptures of any other nation. Few or none of the books however are original. The Canon consists of a number of works brought into the country by Indian monks, and translated into Tibetan from the Sanskrit; some also derived from the

the date of the Chinese rendering is given as 424 A.D. The Tibetan version of the story referred to above is given in Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 90 f.

[1] See a long quotation in *SBE*, xlix. 2nd pt. p. xvi. ff., from a Buddhist manifesto presented in 1893 to the Chicago Congress of Religions:—'In contradistinction to the fallacious phenomena, there is the true essence of mind. Underlying the phenomena of mind, there is an unchanging principle which we call the essence of mind; the fire caused by fagots dies when the fagots are gone, but the essence of fire is never destroyed. The essence of mind is the entity without ideas and without phenomena, and is always the same. It pervades all things, and is pure and unchanging,' etc. (*l.c.* p. xviii.). The Sanskrit text of the Vajraććhedikā was published by Max Müller in 1881 in *Anecd. Oxon.*, Aryan Series, vol. i. pt. i.; and a translation in *SBE*, vol. xlix. The work has been six times translated into

Chinese, and a few in all probability direct from the Pāli.[1] The dates of these translations range generally from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries of our era. Old books and manuscripts, of which a large number exist in the monasteries of Tibet, are held in almost superstitious reverence, and at the hands of the common people receive actual worship. There are two great divisions of the canonical books: the Canon proper, termed the *Kāh-gyur*, or Translated Commandment, because derived from the Sanskrit, which was finally completed in or soon after the fourteenth century; and the Commentaries, or *Tan-gyur*. The former is of stupendous length, comprising one thousand and eighty-three distinct works, distributed in one hundred or one hundred and eight volumes. These volumes are printed from wooden blocks, the art of printing having been introduced from China at an unknown date, but probably not more than two or three centuries ago, on native paper made from the inner bark of a shrub; and consist each of about 1,000 pages.[1] A complete edition is therefore of considerable bulk and weight; but most of the monasteries of Tibet and Sikhim are said to possess copies, and during the English expedition to Lhasa Dr. Waddell found a copy of the Kāh-gyur even in the chapel of the ruined palace at Chumbi.[2] The more important manuscript volumes are often in gold lettering and illuminated

Chinese; amongst others by Hiuen Tsiang and by I-Tsing in the middle and end respectively of the seventh century. Versions also exist in Tibetan and Mongolian.

[1] Dr. Bendall has reported the finding of Pāli manuscripts in the capital of Nepāl; a proof that Hīnayāna literature was known to some extent at least in the north, *JRAS*, 1899, p. 422.

[2] *Lhasa*, p. 89.

with considerable skill, especially those containing a popular work. They are seldom however opened or read, and for the most part lie untouched on their shelves, and covered with dust.[1]

There are only two places in Tibet where the work of printing is carried on. The earlier edition of the text was produced in one hundred volumes at Narthang in the western part of the country, about six miles from Tashi-lhunpo, the later in one hundred and eight at Dergé in the east. There is also a Pekin edition, a copy of which is in the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg; and another printed at Punaka, the capital of Bhutān. The whole was translated into Mongolian about the beginning of the fourteenth century.

A copy of the Narthang edition of 1731 of considerable interest has been recently received in England. According to the accounts given, the Dalai Lama, on his visit to Pekin in 1908, carried with him two copies of the sacred books for presentation to the Empress Dowager of China. Of these one only was offered for acceptance; the second passed into the possession of Lord Ffrench, and was by him sent to London. It is considerably more than two hundred years since a visit of this character took place; and the presentation of the volumes would be of the nature of tribute, and a recognition of Chinese political overlordship.

The Kāh-gyur is divided like the Pāli Tripiṭaka into three parts, namely (1) *Dulva*, or Discipline, the Tibetan Vinaya, which is said to have been compiled by Upāli; (2) *Dō*, the Sūtra or Sermon section, which is further sub-divided into five sections, of which the last, the *Tantra*, is especially romantic and mystical, and has nothing answering to it in the Pāli scriptures; and (3) *Ch'os-non-pa*, corresponding to the Abhidharma, the book of 'Transcendental

[1] *ib.*, p. 225 f.

Wisdom,' a collection of speculative teaching said to have been revealed by the Buddha shortly before his death. This third portion of the Kāh-gyur is contained in twenty-one volumes, which are not however all independent. Another division of the scriptures, which appears to be current in Nepāl, is into nine *dharmas*, or laws.[1] The *Tan-gyur*, or Commentary, is divided into sūtra and tantra sections, and occupies two hundred and twenty-five or two hundred and fifty volumes, which deal with mystic and magical ritual and ceremonies, with literature, science, philosophy, and mythology. A few of the treatises have been examined and translated. But the contents of the whole, as might be expected, are not accurately known.[2] Large numbers of Tibetan books have been brought to Europe, and are to be found in the libraries of London, Oxford, Paris, and St. Petersburg.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENTS

It was thus at a comparatively early period in its history and career that Buddhism spread to Ceylon. On many grounds the inference appears to be justified that in this island and in its Pāli scriptures

[1] See complete lists and brief abstracts of the contents of the several books in Waddell, pp. 159–64; Max Müller, *Selected Essays*, 1881, vol. ii. pp. 170 ff., 183 f.; Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. vi. f., and *passim*, who points out that the Dulva contains also a number of Jātakas, some of which seem to be unknown to the Pāli; see also F. W. Thomas in *JRAS*, 1904, p. 733 ff., and L. A. Waddell, *Catalogue of the Tibetan Manuscripts and Books collected during the Younghusband Mission to Lhasa*, reprinted from the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*.

[2] Waddell, p. 164 f.; *id.*, *Lhasa*, p. 225.

the teaching of the founder has been most faithfully preserved, and developed in most sympathetic harmony with his spirit.

Historical Growth of Buddhism: Ceylon and Burma

From Ceylon according to the received view Buddhism made its way into Burma at an uncertain but early date; and the recognition of the Pāli Canon and books in that country is a sufficient proof of a close historical connection with the southern island. It has, however, been justly pointed out that the presence in Burma of ancient Sanskrit inscriptions written in a North Indian character, bearing date in the early centuries of the Christian era, which make reference to temples and statues of the Buddha, together with certain features that Burmese Buddhism shares rather with the Mahāyāna than with the Hīnayāna school of thought, is evidence that immigrants from Bengal and the Ganges Delta must have passed before this period by land through Manipur and reached Upper Burma, bringing with them their language and their religion.[1] Probably these visitors from North India anticipated by a considerable length of time the Ceylon preachers. The Buddhism of Burma is therefore certainly composite; and its character is best explained in the light of a fusion of northern and southern elements, which met and exercised a mutual influence in the valley of the Irawadi, but of which the latter eventually proved itself the more powerful, and gave a prevailing tone to the whole.

Recent investigations have tended to show that many elements contributed to build up the strangely varied form which Buddhism has assumed in the Burmese peninsula. A primitive animistic creed and worship formed the basis

[1] See, for instance, a note by R. C. Temple in *Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxiv. p. 275.

upon which were superimposed *strata* of beliefs from several directions. There is reason to believe that intercourse with China in the early centuries of our era has left traces of its influence in the sphere of religion in the existence in Upper Burma of the doctrines and teaching of the Mahāyāna as early as the fourth century; which thus preceded by one or more hundred years the advent of Indian missionaries from the north-west. These last brought with them the Sanskrit alphabet, and taught the doctrines of the Northern School of Indian Buddhism. The oldest Buddhist temple in Burma not only bears a Sanskrit name, but clearly owes its origin and character to northern influences. At a later date the peculiar forms and practices of Lāmaism, themselves a strange compound of primitive superstitions with more or less distorted Buddhist conceptions, were introduced from Tibet. Pongyi, the ordinary name for a Burmese monk, is derived from the Tibetan *Bŏn*, the priest of the primitive Shamamistic cult of that land, and bears witness to an influence that must have been both wide and deep.[1] Finally in the eleventh century the Hīnayāna doctrines of the Southern School reached Burma from Ceylon, and in course of time established a paramount influence throughout the country.[2]

Missionaries from Ceylon moreover carried the Buddhist faith throughout the Malay peninsula, Sumatra and Java, and to other islands of the

[1] Waddell, *Lāmaism*, p. 30 and note.

[2] 'A close study of inscriptions and native histories reveals the fact that as the religion, letters, and civilisation of Upper Burma were influenced by Magadha, Nepāl, Tibet, and China, so those of the Talaings of Lower Burma were affected by Ceylon, Southern India, and Cambodia, and these two streams of influence finally coalesced at Pagān in the eleventh century A.D.' Note by Mr. Taw-Sein-Ko in V. C. Scott O'Connor, *Mandalay*, London, 1907, p. 244; cp. p. 423 ff., where a brief summary of chronological development is given from the *Archaeological Survey Report of Burma* for the year 1906–07. On Chinese influence on the Buddhism of Burma see also an article in *IA*, 1906, p. 211 ff. From a study of Burmese Law-books the same conclusion as to the composite nature of the religion is drawn by J. Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, p. 41 ff.

Eastern Archipelago. Here also however the influence of Indian thought and teaching was not wanting, and perhaps in most instances preceded its rival. The two schools met especially in Cambodia and Siam, and the result of the fusion, as in Burma, was to produce a type of Buddhism more or less distinct from either of the other two, and reflecting the national character of the people of the land.[1]

Kashmīr and Nepāl

The attempt to trace the spread of Buddhism to other countries than its original home is beset with all the difficulties and uncertainties that surround the chronology of ancient India and the East in general. The dates furnished by tradition or the native records can in most instances hardly be relied upon as more than approximate. The faith is said to have been preached in Kashmīr within half a century of the death of Gautama Buddha by the great monk and evangelist Madhyāntika, a disciple of Ānanda. Nepāl has been Buddhist from the earliest times, and it was by way of Nepāl, in all probability, that Buddhism reached Tibet. The religious practice however of the inhabitants of both countries has always been of a lax and accommodating character. Only some four centuries ago apparently did the religion penetrate from Nepāl into Bhutān and Sikhim.[2]

[1] On the Buddhism of Siam, in which primitive non-Buddhistic beliefs and practices have maintained themselves almost as tenaciously and fully as in Tibet itself, compare P. A. Thompson, *Lotus Land*, ch. iii. The date of the introduction of Buddhism into Java is placed as early as the beginning of the fifth century A.D.; see R. Sewell in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 419.

[2] On Nepāl, cp. Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 80 f., Rockhill, p. 210 f.; Bhutān, *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 561, with the references there given, *IGI*, *s.v.*; Sikhim, *IGI*, *s.v.*

China received the faith direct from India in the year 62 of our era. Thence it was carried to Korea in 372 A.D., and in 552 A.D. to Japan. These last two countries have always been religiously dependent upon China as far as Buddhism was concerned; and in Japan in particular the sacred books were studied in Chinese more than in their original tongue. Buddhism was introduced into Tibet during the years 638–40 A.D. at the instance of *Sron Tsan Gampo*, the first great King of Tibet known to history, who had married Buddhist wives from Nepāl and China. Little progress however was made until about a century later, when, at the invitation of another king named *Sron de Tsan*, a great conqueror and Buddhist, the Indian monk and saint *Padma-Sambhava* arrived in Tibet, and became there the real founder of Lāmaism, the form which the religion of the Buddha has assumed in that country. Popular tradition and belief has credited Padma-Sambhava with the most extensive miraculous powers. His name is as much revered as that of the Buddha himself, and throughout Tibet he receives divine honours. This Lāmaist form of the Buddhist religion is known also in the western parts of China, and is in almost exclusive possession of Mongolia, where it appears to have been introduced about the close of the sixteenth century. The majority of the inhabitants of Manchuria are nominal adherents of the same faith.[1]

China Japan and Tibet

[1] Waddell, *Buddhism in Tibet*, ch. iii., *Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa*, in *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 923 ff., 938 f.; *IA*, 1904, p. 112; *JRAS*, 1903, p. 112, where in a note on the Tibetan MSS. of the Stein collection from Central Asia the same date for the introduction of Buddhism is inferred on literary and palaeographical grounds; Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, pp. 209 ff., 219 ff.

In the north-west of India and beyond the border, the rule of the Graeco-Scythian kings, with the comparative security which it afforded, would facilitate the spread in that direction of the religious movement of Buddhism. Buddhist missionaries are said to have penetrated as far as Egypt, whence according to the Mahāvaṁsa thousands of *Bhikkhus* or monks came to the Patna Council. The Tartar Lords of the Golden Horde, who with their hosts overran the east of Europe in the thirteenth century, and to whom the early Christians paid tribute, were Buddhists. And in European Russia there still exists a small colony of Kalmuks settled on the lower Volga, according to the latest census about 160,000 in number, who profess the Buddhist, or rather the Lāmaist faith. These are the remnant of a great nation who migrated into Russia in the seventeenth century, but the majority of whom returned in 1771 to Zungaria, their ancient home in the south-west of Mongolia, between the Altai and the Tian-Shan Mountains.[1]

Egypt and Russia

The communication of religious literature and thought between India and China was for a number of years maintained by the intermediary of Buddhist monks from China, who at great risk and with great expenditure of time and effort made their way to India, and visited the sacred places of Buddhism. Some of these travellers have left memorable records of their experiences and of the religious condition of the lands which they visited. The three of greatest importance, whose works have

Chinese Buddhist Monks

[1] Cp. A. H. Keane in *C. M. S. Intelligencer*, 1894, p. 730, or *Atlas*, p. 10; Waddell, *op. cit.*, p. 42; Wallace, *Russia*, new edition, 1905, vol. i. p. 271.

been preserved, were, in the order named, Fā-Hian, Hiuen-Tsiang, and I-Tsing. These monks, whose enthusiastic and self-denying zeal on behalf of their faith has rarely been surpassed, travelled with the intention not only of seeing the sacred places and most flourishing centres of Buddhism, but of securing copies of the sacred books for translation into Chinese. The identification of the exact routes which they followed presents often considerable difficulties, and in parts at least the subject awaits a fuller and more exact determination in the light of recent discoveries in Central Asia and Nepāl and on the North-West Frontier of India. Their journeyings involved an absence from their own country of many years; and the narratives of their experiences which they furnish have proved to be the most valuable material for forming a true conception of the position which Buddhism held in India in their day. They also supply us with welcome fixed dates in Indian chronology. All three works have appeared in English translations.[1]

The earliest of the three was Fā-Hian, a native of the province of Shansi in North China, who undertook a journey to India and Ceylon at the beginning of the fifth century of our era for the purpose of obtaining copies of the Vinaya Piṭaka, parts or the whole of which

Fā-Hian

[1] *Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*, being an account by the Chinese monk Fā-Hien of his travels in India and Ceylon in search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline, translated by J. Legge, Oxford, 1886; *Si-yu-ki*, or Buddhist Records of the Western World, translated from the Chinese of Hiuen-Tsiang by S. Beal, 2 vols., Boston, 1885, or T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, ed. by T. W. Rhys Davids and S. W. Bushell, 2 vols., London, 1904–05; *Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago*, by I-Tsing, translated by J. Takakusu, Oxford, 1896.

he is said after his return to have published in a Chinese rendering. His visit to Ceylon coincided in date with that of Buddhaghosha. The account which he wrote of his journey is entitled 'A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms,' but in the Japanese recension 'Narrative of the Travels of Fā-Hian.' Setting out with four companions overland in or about the year 400 A.D., he made his way westwards across Central Asia slowly and with many halts to Khotan, where he found a strong Buddhist community, and where he remained three months. Thence his route is difficult to follow in detail, but the party crossed the 'Snow Mountains,' and found themselves in North India, where at a place named To-leih, or To-li, doubtfully identified with Dardistān or the country of the Dards on the upper Indus in the extreme north-west of India,[1] they saw a miraculous wooden image of Maitreya, the future Buddha. The same image was also visited and seen later by Hiuen-Tsiang. Turning eastward Fā-Hian passed through the Panjāb and parts of the North-West Provinces, finding everywhere a flourishing Buddhism and relics of the Buddha. Thence he came down to Mathura or Muttra and a place near Kanauj, at which Gautama descended after preaching the law to his mother in the Trayastriṁśa heaven. The miraculous appearances attending his descent are all duly detailed. Still further south-east and south was S'rāvastī, which is described as almost deserted, and Fā-Hian recounts the legends and miracles of its history. Westward from S'rāvastī they came to the birthplace of Kaśyapa Buddha, and thence

[1] Cunningham, *Ancient Geography*, p. 82 f.; Legge, p. 24, note 2, where the latitude and longitude are apparently wrongly printed; and also note on Sketch-Map, p. xvii. Cp. Beal, *Siyuki*, i. pp. xxix., 134 and n. 37.

again south-east and south to Kapilavastu, in which 'there was neither king nor people'; the site was abandoned, and the Chinese traveller found only a few monks and some poor families. From Kapilavastu his route led him to Kuśanagara, Vaiśālī, and Pātaliputra or Patna, the capital of king Aśoka. This city he describes with its monasteries. After a brief round of visits to Rājagṛiha, Buddha Gayā, and Benares, he returned to Patna and settled there for three years, studying Sanskrit and the Buddhist law, and copying manuscripts of the sacred texts.[1] From Patna he travelled down the river to the kingdom of Tāmraliptī, the modern Tamlūk in the district of Midnapur, where he spent two years, and from which place he took ship to Ceylon.[2] The date of his arrival in the island must have been about the year 411 during the time of the king Mahānāma, who reigned 410–432 A.D. He describes the wonders of Ceylon, its relics including the Buddha's tooth, with the religious ceremonies and monasteries of the island. After a stay here of two years he sailed by way of Java for China, where he arrived safely with his books after many perils by sea, upon which he cannot look back without emotion. According to his own statement his travels thus covered altogether a

[1] At a later date Hiuen-Tsiang describes Pātaliputra as being in ruins, *Siyuki*, pp. 82 f., 85 f., 167. Its overthrow was perhaps due to foreign invasion; cp. V. A. Smith, *Asoka*, p. 87 ff.

[2] The modern town is sixty miles from the sea. But at the time of Fā-Hian's visit Tāmraliptī was a seaport, and so it was found to be by Hiuen-Tsiang two centuries later. I-Tsing also embarked from and returned to Tāmraliptī. The fact illustrates the rapid growth of the land in and about the delta of the Hūglī river. See *IGI*, *s.v.* Tamlūk; W. W. Hunter, *India of the Queen and other Essays*, London, 1903, p. 200; Beal, vol. ii. p. 200 f.

period of fifteen years. He is recorded to have died at the age of eighty-eight in the Chinese monastery of Sin.

After the lapse of rather more than two centuries Fā-Hian was followed by another Chinese monk,[1] Hiuen-Tsiang, of great and lasting reputation, whose travels extended over sixteen years from 629 to 645 A.D., and who is said after his return to have produced a Chinese rendering of no less than seventy-five Buddhist works which he had brought back with him. In his journey from China Hiuen-Tsiang followed the same general course as Fā-Hian, but travelled much more widely in India itself. He did not however visit Ceylon, but gives an account of the island on the authority of other travellers and merchants,[2] returning to his own country by land through the northern part of Tibet. The name and fame of the Chinese traveller were found by Dr. Stein to be kept in memory in Central Asia even at the present day, where the tradition of his learning and devotion still lingered among the priesthood, and legends of miracles have gathered around his memory.[3] And recent research has tended altogether to confirm the accuracy and reliability of his narrative.

Hiuen-Tsiang

Hiuen-Tsiang's account of his life and experiences

[1] Other Buddhist pilgrims had visited India in the interval, and Indian monks had made their way to China and spent many years there. No records however of their work or journeyings have been preserved beyond brief notices by later writers.

[2] Beal, vol. ii. p. 235 ff.

[3] Cp. *Sand-Buried Ruins of Khotan*, *passim*, and especially Dr. Stein's narrative of his wonderful literary 'find' at the 'Halls of the Thousand Buddhas' in the east of Kansu, *JRGS*, 1909, p. 243 ff., or *Ruins of Desert Cathay*, vol. ii. chh. lii., lxiv-lxx.

in India forms the most vivid and complete picture of the ancient condition of the country that has been preserved. The religious state of things did not greatly differ from that which the earlier pilgrim had found. Everywhere with few exceptions Buddhism was flourishing, but the Mahāyāna school and teaching had gained considerable ground at the expense of the Hīnayāna. The most striking feature however of the religious life of the country was the revival of Brāhmanism, which even in Buddha Gayā, the great centre of Buddhist faith and pilgrimage, had to a considerable extent supplanted its rival. To this day the place is sacred to both Hindus and Buddhists, and the pilgrims of both faiths resort thither.[1]

At Kanauj a great Buddhist sovereign, Harsha-vardhana S'īlāditya,[2] was in power, and at his capital Hiuen-Tsiang found as many as a hundred monasteries with 10,000 monks. Under his presidency a numerously attended Council assembled at Prayāga, or Allahābād, in the year 643 A.D., at which the Chinese traveller was present, when discussions were held between Buddhists and Brāhmans, and between members of the different sects of the two religions. Eighteen kings are said to have attended the Council with 500,000 monks and laymen. The proceedings lasted three days, on the first of which, with much pomp and ceremony, the statue of Buddha was erected, on the second that of the Sun, and on the third that of S'iva. Other indications show that the king

[1] Cp. Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 398 f.; *IGI*, *s.v.*

[2] Monier-Williams calls him the fourth great Buddhist king of India, *l.c.*, p. 167; Beal, i. p. 210 f.; C. M. Duff, *Chronology of India*, p. 45 f., and references; R. Hoernle, in *JRAS*, 1903, p. 547 ff.

was not always the convinced and enthusiastic Buddhist that Hiuen-Tsiang represents him to be. For on a copper-plate grant from Mādhuban he calls himself a Śaivite. Every five years on the plain near Allahābād a festival took place,[1] accompanied with much feasting and distribution of treasure and gifts to Buddhists and Brāhmans alike, closing with a ceremony in which the king, to imitate the Great Renunciation, stripped himself of his robes, and went forth in a beggar's rags. Hiuen-Tsiang describes also the important and flourishing Buddhist university at Nālanda, the modern Barāgāon near Gayā, with its numerous monasteries and temples maintained at the king's expense, and its thousands of monks belonging to the eighteen principal Buddhist sects, constantly engaged in the study of the sacred writings and commentaries.[2]

I-Tsing

I-Tsing, the third and last of the great Buddhist scholars and pilgrims from China, followed not long after Hiuen-Tsiang, perhaps inspired by his example, in the latter half of the seventh century. His journeyings were prolonged for twenty-five years; and his principal

[1] Allahābād, at the confluence of the two sacred rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna, is to this day one of the greatest centres of religious pilgrimage in India. See a recent description of the great bathing festival of the *Māgh Melā*, held at the beginning of the year and attended by many thousand pilgrims, in *Bible in the World*, 1908, p. 277 ff. Cp. *IGI*, *s.v.*, *ERE*, vol. i. p. 327. The character of the festival is probably essentially the same as in Hiuen-Tsiang's time.

[2] Beal, vol. ii. pp. 167 f., 170 f. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues*, p. 1 n., places Nālanda seven miles north of Rājagṛiha; compare T. Bloch in *JRAS*, 1909, p. 440 ff., who writes the modern name Bargāv, and says that the form Barāgāon is a mistake; *IGI*, *s.v.*

work is an account of Buddhist manners, customs, and belief in the lands in which he travelled. In the year 671, at the age of thirty-six, he started for India from Chang-an, the then capital of China, in the province of Shensi, and with only one companion sailed for the South from Kwang-Tung. The place where he first landed is called Bhoja, or S'rībhoja, and is supposed to be the same as Sumatra. Thence, after a stay of a few months, I-Tsing took ship for Tāmraliptī, where he arrived two years after leaving Chang-an. Through many difficulties and dangers he made his way to Nālanda, and there remained for ten years, devoting the time to study and the collection of Sanskrit books. During the twenty-five years that he spent abroad he is said to have travelled in more than thirty different countries, and to have brought or sent home to China four hundred Buddhist texts. Of these after his return, with the help of native Indian scholars who accompanied him to China, he published translations in two hundred and thirty volumes of fifty-six separate works. His own treatise shows acquaintance with the earlier accounts of Hiuen-Tsiang; and he seems to have been present in Chang-an in 664 at the time of the death of the latter. I-Tsing himself died after an adventurous and laborious life in his 79th year, A.D. 713. Although he did not travel in India itself so extensively as his predecessors, yet his industry in collecting information, and the care with which he records his observations, render his work of especial interest and value both from a historical and religious point of view. Of the four chief *nikāyas* or schools of Buddhist thought and practice which he found existing in India, his account applies especially to the *Mūlasarvāstivādins*, or 'those

who affirm the principle of the reality of all existence.'[1]

DOCTRINES AND SECTS

THE doctrine or truth which formed the basis of the Buddha's teaching, and which he claimed to have received under the Bo-Tree as a flash of spiritual and intellectual enlightenment, is comparatively simple. Richly diverse and complex as were the developments of the faith and ritual of Buddhism in the countries to which it spread, the original form in which it was proclaimed by Gautama himself, as recorded in the sacred books of the Southern School, is characterised by an absence of ornament or elaboration, which is all in favour of its genuineness. These fundamental truths were set forth in the first sermon which Gautama preached after his attainment of perfect wisdom to the five monks or ascetics with whom he had formerly in vain practised austerities. In themselves they are not difficult to state or to apprehend. They represent however a philosophy or a moral system, rather than a religion. And their precise significance in relation to other and earlier creeds, together with the construction placed upon them by his contemporaries ; how much is really original, and how much is due to later building upon a foundation already laid which is now obscured beyond recovery, are subjects upon which much has been written, but which can hardly be said to have been relieved of all difficulty and confusion. The primitive statement of doctrine would naturally

[1] *Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p. xxi. ff. ; *infra*, p. 547 f.

be simple, and free from elaboration and technicalities. The tendency to philosophical refinement and speculation would be likely to show itself later; and the rich mythology and hierarchical developments of the Mahāyāna belong to a still later period, and are out of sympathy with all that is known of the spirit of Gautama himself. Before his time however religious insight in India and the discussion of questions of theology appear to have reached so high a level, that more may be due to the direct inspiration and teaching of the Buddha himself than is sometimes believed to be possible. There would at least be no anachronism in the formulating in his day of doctrines which a subsequent age was to adopt restate and develop.

The teaching of the Buddha assumes as its foundation and starting-point the principle, so familiar to Indian thought, that all existence is and must be encompassed with misery. **Āryasatyāni** It is not only the conditions of existence that are out of joint; existence itself is an evil, and necessarily involves suffering for the creature that exists. Life in itself is not and cannot be other than a source of pain and unhappiness. This was the first and fundamental truth which the Buddha proclaimed. And although the form in which it was clothed might be new, the doctrine itself was old on the soil of India, and is recognised as a truism by all the foremost of her philosophers.

In the Sāṅkhya school of thought, for example, with which Buddhism has so much in common, the four truths or doctrines have already found expression in (similar or identical terms; (2) and (3) are placed in reverse order; and the means of escape for the soul from its present entanglement in matter are formulated and discussed in the sūtras under these four headings. In harmony with Sāṅkhya teaching however, (3) the

cause of suffering is assumed to consist in the association of the soul with the material world; and (4) therefore, the means of escape, is the severance of this association. Cp. *supra*, pp. 322, 327 f.; Garbe, *Sāṁkhya und Yoga*, p. 17 f.

The principles which Gautama thus enunciated are conveyed after the usual manner in formulas or aphorisms, which are known as the four *Āryasatyāni*, or Noble Truths, and may be briefly summarised as follows:—All existence involves suffering; suffering is caused by desire, especially the desire for continuance of existence; the suppression of desire therefore will lead to the extinction of suffering. These are the first three Noble Truths. The fourth and last is the doctrine or path by which this deliverance may be effected; the Noble Eightfold Path, sometimes called the Middle Path because it avoids the two extremes of bodily indulgence and self-mortification or asceticism.[1] The elements or grades of the Path are defined to be right belief, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right occupation, right effort, right contemplation, right concentration[2]. This primary

[1] The four catch-words as it were of the Āryasatyāni are *duhkha*, pain; *samudāya*, cause; *nirodha*, suppression; *mārga*, way or path.

[2] *Mahāv.*, i. 6. 17 ff., translated in *SBE*, xiii. p. 94 ff. The subject is often referred to and the terms repeated in the Buddhist books. See especially the Sutta of the 'Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness,' *SBE*, xi. p. 146 ff., and 'Exposition of the Path leading to the Cessation of Misery,' translated from *Mahā-satipatthāna-Sutta*, 107. 35, in Warren, p. 372 ff., where the meaning of the terms used is explained in detail. It is not easy to find English equivalents, precise and sufficient, for the technical Pāli words. The rendering adopted is practically that of Warren, *l.c.* Monier-Williams gives 'right belief or views, right resolve, right speech, right work, right livelihood, right exercise or training, right mindfulness, right mental concentration' (*Buddhism*, p. 44). Rhys Davids and

teaching of the Buddha on the four Noble Truths and the Middle Path is referred to as the setting in motion of the Wheel of the Law, or the founding of the Kingdom of Truth.[1] According to some authorities these four doctrines or truths, or at least the terms in which they are expressed, are

Oldenberg in *SBE*, *l.c.*, have 'right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right endeavour, right memory, right meditation,' *sammādiṭṭhi*, *samāsaṅkappa*, *sammāvācā*, *sammākammanta*, *sammājīva*, *sammāvāyāma*, *sammāsati*, *sammāsāmādhi*; cp. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues*, pp. 202, 226, where slightly different renderings are given :—

'This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of Suffering: Birth is suffering; decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering. Presence of objects we hate is suffering; separation from objects we love is suffering; not to obtain what we desire is suffering. Briefly, the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering.

'This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of the Cause of suffering: Thirst, that leads to re-birth, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delight here and there. (This thirst is threefold), namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity.

'This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of suffering: (it ceases with) the complete cessation of this thirst,—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion,—with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away of it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire.

'This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering: that holy eightfold Path, that is to say, Right Belief, etc.

. . . . . .

'And as the Blessed One had founded the Kingdom of Truth (by propounding the four Noble Truths), the earth-inhabiting devas shouted: "Truly the Blessed One has founded at Benares in the deer-park Isipatana the highest Kingdom of Truth, which may be opposed neither by a Samana nor by a Brāhmana, neither by a deva, nor by Māra, nor by Brahma, nor by any being in the world."'

[1] *Mahāv.*, i. 6. 30; *Dhamma-ćakka-ppavattana-sutta*, 25 ff.

derived from Indian medical science, being merely transferred from the region of matter and physics to that of the spirit.[1]

Thus the *āryasatyāni* were not, in substance at least, new. The new element apparently was the stress laid upon the possibility of deliverance, deliverance achieved here and now by a man's individual effort; by insight into the truth which the Buddha preached he became at once free from the pains and penalties of future existence, and was no longer subject to re-birth. There can be little doubt that herein lay the secret of the success with which his ministry was accompanied. He proclaimed, it was true, an old and familiar philosophy, in its essence pessimistic in the extreme, as far at least as the present life was concerned; but with it he preached to all, without distinction of birth, race, or caste, immediate deliverance from the suffering, which in harmony with all Indian belief and teaching he held to be involved in the very fact of existence. It was an immeasurable boon to be assured that it was not necessary to wait through millenniums of re-births before salvation from pain and misery could be experienced. The attractiveness of such teaching, and its close similarity to some forms of the Christian doctrine of conversion, are obvious. Probably also in expounding and enforcing a simple and pure code of morality, such as that to which the noble eightfold Path, with all its mysticism and difficulties of interpretation, bears witness, he won many followers to whom the subleties of the schools were unintelligible, and their exaltation of the unworldly and ascetic life repellent. In its present form and with many accretions

[1] Kern, p. 46 f.; M. Poussin, in *JRAS*, 1903, p. 578 ff. On the *āryasatyāni* see also Kern, pp. 23 f., 52, and references.

the doctrine of the Path has of course been moulded by later thought and experience. In its origin there seems no reason to reject the tradition of its derivation from Gautama himself; who in his turn perhaps merely adopted and modified what he had received from the lips of his early instructors.

The second fundamental doctrine or principle is of great interest as an early attempt to find an explanation of the origin of evil. This is the theory of the twelve *Nidānas*, or causes, a chain of cause and effect, said to have been discovered or thought out by Gautama in the period immediately following his attainment of Buddhahood. The name or title adopted denotes in the first instance a band or bond in general, and was then applied to the primary or ultimate cause which by means of a succession of secondary causes was united with the present through an unbroken series of dependent states or events, human life as it is now experienced being thus connected with its first beginnings. The whole theory therefore is part of a reasoned philosophy of being or existence; and as such can never have formed part of a popular propaganda, or formed the material of early Buddhist preaching. *Nidāna* also, as the primary seat or cause of a disease, was a technical term of the Indian medical schools.

Nidānas

The links of causation begin with ignorance, which therefore is the primary root of all evil:—

> 'On ignorance depends *karma*; on *karma* depends consciousness; on consciousness depend name and form; on name and form depend the six organs of sense; on the six organs of sense depends contact; on contact depends sensation; on sensation depends desire; on desire depends attachment; on attachment depends existence; on existence

depends birth; on birth depend old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair.'[1]

These terms, it will be noticed, express *states*, not substances or things. The interpretation of them presents many difficulties; and in fact the series has been very variously explained. As thus formulated there appears to be in the whole little logical sequence or obvious meaning. The successive *Nidānas* moreover are not always given in the same order; nor are the Sanskrit or Pāli words themselves absolutely free from ambiguity. Nevertheless, the statement or theory appears to represent a genuine attempt to explain the anomalies of existence, and to solve the mystery of suffering. The same theory is known by the name of 'Dependent Origination,'[2] because the elements of

[1] *Mahāv.*, i. 1. 2; cp. Warren, p. 83 ff.; Barth, *Religions of India*, p. 110 f.; Kern, p. 47 ff. The Sanskrit terms are *avidyā*, ignorance; *saṁskārās*, constituents of being, everything that goes to make up the universe and its content, a word which Warren rather paraphrases than translates by *karma*, and Kern renders by 'impressions,' while Rhys Davids and Oldenberg prefer to retain the Pāli expression; *SBE*, xiii. p. 75 f. There is no real English equivalent, simply because the idea conveyed finds no place in Western philosophy. The remaining terms of the series are *vijñāna*, consciousness; *nāmarūpa*, name and form; *shaḍāyatana*, the six senses, or rather the organs in which they reside; *sparśa*, touch or contact; *vedanā*, feeling; *trishṇā*, desire, literally thirst; *upādāna*, exertion, attachment; *bhava*, becoming, being; *jāti*, birth; *jarāmaranam*, old age and death. Cp. Monier-Williams, p. 102 f. A briefer and, according to Rhys Davids, older form of the Nidānas is apparently set forth in the Brahmajāla Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya; see *Dialogues*, p. 53. A brick inscribed with the twelve Nidānas was found a few years ago in a stūpa at Gopālpūr in the Ganjam District of the Madras Presidency; *IA*, 1904, p. 175 ff.

[2] *Pratītyasamutpāda.* In the development of Buddhist teaching little or no use was made of the theory of the Nidānas. The

being arise out of and are dependent upon one another, and can only come into existence in succession. Elsewhere it is spoken of as 'The Middle Doctrine,' lying between the two extremes of belief in being, τὸ ὄν, and nihilism or belief in not being, τὸ μὴ ὄν.[1]

Origin and Significance of Theory of Nidānas

On the meaning and explanation of the series of causes and effects thus remarkably conceived and set forth various theories have been propounded, none of them entirely satisfactory. There is sufficient in common with the articles and technical terms of the Sāṅkhya philosophy to warrant the conclusion that elements are to be found in each which have been derived from one and the same ultimate source. It is also not without significance, as indicating the close relation between Buddhist teaching

mystical doctrine of the *trikāya*, the three bodies of the *Buddha*, appears to a large extent to have taken its place; cp. V. Poussin in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 943, *infra*, p. 542.

[1] Cp. *e.g. Visuddhi-Magga*, xvii., quoted in Warren, p. 168 ff.; *Mahā-Nidāna-Sutta*, *ibid.*, 202 ff.; *Saṁyutta-Nikāya*, xxii. 90. 16:—

'The world for the most part, O Kaccāna, holds either to a belief in being or to a belief in non-being. But for one who in the light of the highest knowledge, O Kaccāna, considers how the world ceases, belief in the non-being of the world passes away. And for one who in the light of the highest knowledge, O Kaccāna, considers how the world ceases, belief in the being of the world passes away.

. . . . . .

'That things have being, O Kaccāna, constitutes one extreme of doctrine; that things have no being is the other extreme. These extremes, O Kaccāna, have been avoided by the Tathāgata, and it is a middle doctrine he teaches:

'On ignorance depends *karma*,' etc. Warren, p. 165 f.

and the Hindu schools, that in the Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama a similar chain of causation, although comprising fewer terms, is expounded, the final end or issue of which is *niḥśreyasa*, supreme bliss, corresponding to the Buddhist *nirvāṇa*.

The successive elements of the Indian series are given as 'pain, birth, activity, faults, false notions.' From the 'knowledge of the truth false notions disappear. When false notions disappear, the "faults" pass away; with them ceases "activity"; and with it ceases "birth"; and with the cessation of "birth" comes the entire abolition of "pain," and this absolute abolition is final bliss.' See Cowell and Gough, *Sarvā-darśana-saṅgraha*, p. 165 f.; Max Müller, *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, 1899, p. 494 ff. The resemblance between the two series is greater than would naturally be explained on a theory of mutual independence. The relationship however is hardly direct, but due to derivation from a common source or sources.

It has been suggested that in reality the Nidānas contain a philosophical theory of life, in which the history of the human being is traced in metaphysical terms from birth to death. An obvious objection to this explanation, which has often been pointed out, is that assuming a philosophical or biological origin of the formula there are two life-histories, not one, comprised within its limits. The first begins with ignorance, and through the *saṁskārās* and consciousness reaches its full development in *nāmarūpa*, name and form. The second returns again to birth, which is explained as originating in desire or longing, and leads on in due course to old age and death. It seems not improbable that this is, in part at least, the true interpretation of the repetitions and incoherencies of the Chain of Causation in its present form, that it endeavours to combine two or perhaps more ancient formulae

or hypotheses concerning human life, working them up together and seeking to fit them the one into the other. Later and more ripened conceptions were imposed upon earlier; and the whole, which was really the product of a subsequent age, was put into the mouth of the Buddha himself. How far this was really the case it is impossible now to determine. But that the theory in the form in which it has come down to us ever sufficed for the text of an attractive public discourse, such as Gautama is represented as delivering, appears incredible.[1]

Others have found in the Buddhist doctrine of causation an adaptation of an ancient cosmology, and have supposed that a creation myth is here translated into philosophical terms, and applied to the unravelling of the mysteries of human life. Dr. Waddell has figured a large diagram or picture of the Wheel of Life from the Ajanta caves in the north-east of the State of Haidarābād, on which the twelve Nidānas are represented in succession around the rim of the wheel,—'a complete authentic account of human life from the absolute standpoint of the earliest Buddhist philosophy.' The figure of a wheel without beginning or end expresses the perpetual round or recurrence of life. At the centre are the three vices, passion or lust, hatred, and folly, symbolized respectively by a cock, a serpent, and a pig, to denote the forces that control and perpetuate life. Between the rim and the nave are represented scenes of blessedness or woe from the various heavens, worlds, and hells. The wheel is grasped by a demon or monster, who is emblematic of the evil craving for existence. Outside stands

[1] Cp. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 115.

the Buddha, to show that he has escaped from the vicious circle, and is no more subject to rebirth.[1]

Buddhist Confession of Faith

By the side of this explanation or theory of the origin of being, and in a great measure independent of it, was the celebrated formula which has been termed the Buddhist confession of faith. This formula, constantly on the lips of devout Buddhists and carved on their monuments, is apparently intended to give expression to a thought similar to that underlying the Chain of Causation; and its especial interest lies in its suggestion of lines of thought and development other than those of mere materialism, with which the Buddhist faith has been so often charged. The formula appears first in the history in connection with the conversion of two of the greatest of the early disciples of the Buddha, Sāriputta and Moggallāna[2]; and in each case the recitation of the words by the venerable monk Assaji is said to have aroused in the mind of the hearer a clear understanding of the fact that 'whatever is subject to origination is subject also to cessation or destruction':—

'Laws or conditions of existence that arise from a cause, the

[1] *Buddhism of Tibet*, p. 107 ff.; cp. Kern, p. 47. The traditional explanation of the picture was given to Dr. Waddell by the Lāmas themselves. On the caves at Ajan a see *IGI*, *s.v.*, and the references there given; A. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, London, 1901, *passim*.

[2] *Mahāv.*, i. 23. 5, 10; Warren, p. 87 ff.; cp. *supra*, p. 446. The traditional birthplaces of the two sages, with commemorative stūpas built by Aśoka, were visited by Hiuen-Tsiang; Beal, *Siyuki*, ii. p. 175 ff., where also the story of their conversion is repeated. They are both said to have been high-born Brāhmans, and to have been friends in youth.

cause of these the Buddha declared, and also the destruction of them. Such truths the great Teacher uttered.'[1]

The relation between the statement of doctrine and the conclusion drawn is not at first sight altogether clear. The link between the two is perhaps to be found in the series of the Nidānas; and the middle term, as it were, that brings them into dependence upon one another is the consideration that existence with its attendant misery was by the Buddha shown to have been effected by the operation of certain causes, and was thereby proved to be terminable when those causes ceased to act. In other words, the way of escape from the evils of life was pointed out in the destruction or suppression of the causes of life itself. It is however worthy of note that this formula and the Chain of Causation are never in the books brought into direct connection. It is possible therefore that there are here preserved in fragmentary form indications that point to a more truly philosophical and consistent, a less materialistic theory of the universe,—a theory which endeavoured to trace all things backwards and upwards to the one great primitive cause of all.

Buddhist Conception of Life

In these doctrines and formulae there is no explicit contradiction or dissent from the current Brāhmanical speculations, and nothing out of harmony with the tendencies of Hindu thought. They run parallel to, if they are not actually derived from forms of Indian philosophy which have persisted to the present day. It is otherwise with the Buddha's teaching concerning

[1] *Ye dharmā hetu-prabhavā hetum teshām Tathāgataḥ hy avadat teshāñća yo nirodha evam-vādī Mahā-S'ramanaḥ.* Cp. *SBE*, xiii. p. 144 ff.; Kern, p. 25; Monier-Williams, p. 104.

the origin and nature of the living being, and his denial of the existence of a soul.[1] Here he came into conflict,—it can hardly have been undesignedly —with the most acceptable and widespread of Hindu beliefs. In some of the books he is represented as setting aside, on the ground that they do not conduce to immediate profit, such questions as the identity of the *ātman*, the self or soul, with the body, of a future existence, or of the eternity of the visible world. Elsewhere however a more than merely agnostic position is taken up, and a distinct denial seems to be given to the proposition that there is present in the living being anything beyond the body and its material constituents.[2] The Buddha therefore found himself then confronted with the ever-recurrent problem, how to explain life and the perpetuation of life with all its miseries and alternations of fortune on materialistic principles, and without postulating a spiritual author or cause of all. A theory of life which on whatever grounds rejected as insufficient or irrelevant the accepted spiritualistic interpretation of the universe finds itself under the necessity of inventing or describing an alternative scheme of

[1] Cp. *Buddhist Psychology*, Introd. p. xxxv. ff., where the Buddhist doctrine is rightly regarded as a protest against crude animism, no less than against refined Hindu philosophy.

[2] See especially the well-known comparison of the chariot and its parts in the Milinda-panha, 26–28; *SBE*, xxxv. p. 43 ff.; art. *Agnosticism* (Buddhist) in *ERE*, vol. i. p. 220 ff. There appears to be no sufficient reason for refusing to ascribe to the Buddha himself the origination at least of this materialistic or agnostic teaching. That it was developed and systematized by his successors is probable. Its apparent want of connection with the doctrine of the four Noble Truths, etc., is no sufficient argument against its conception within the same Oriental mind.

explanation, which shall link together into a consistent whole the past and present experiences of mankind collectively and individually with the prospective future. It was to the solution to this problem that an agnostic or anti-spiritualistic Buddhism was compelled to address itself.

On these presuppositions the solution proposed could hardly be conceived on other than strictly materialistic lines, ignoring if not openly repudiating the aid of the supernatural. It must proceed rigorously from cause to effect, without any contributory assistance from the side of the spirit. It would seem that this was the purpose and aim of the theory of the *Skandhas*. Briefly indicated the theory is as follows. The living being is constituted out of two or more of the five groups of elements, known as *skandhas*. These are *rupa*, form; *vedanā*, feeling or sensation; *saṅjnā*, perception; *saṁskāra*, predisposition; *vijñāna*, consciousness or thought. The first group contains four primary and twenty-four derivative 'forms,' the primary being the familiar earth, air, fire, and water. The second and third groups have each five divisions. To the fourth group are assigned fifty-one, and to the last, the most important group, eighty-nine parts or elements.[1] All five *skandhas* are present in the human being, but a less number in any one of the lower animals. They unite together at birth to form the living sentient creature, and in death are again dissolved and perish. From the different proportions in which they are united arise the different characters, dispositions, etc., of living beings. Apart from them no existence is possible; and

Skandhas

[1] A complete list derived from the Visuddhi-Magga is given by Warren, p. 487 ff.

when the combination is broken up at death the individual ceases to be. The great aim of Buddhist teaching therefore is to show by what means the reconstitution of the skandhas may be prevented, and thus release obtained from existence with its weariness and sorrow.

It is however distinctly denied that either singly or in combination the skandhas *are* the individual. Such views as that 'Sensation is my *ātman*,' self or *ego*, are qualified as heretical; while at the same time the idea of the existence of any *ātman* independent of the skandhas is strenuously rejected.[1] There is therefore no 'soul' which in its individual and personal identity endures,

[1] For the denial of the identity of the skandhas with the living being see *Mahāv.*, i. 6. 38–41, *Mahā-Nidāna-Sutta*, 256. 21. Cp. Rhys Davids, *JRAS*, 1903, p. 587 ff., and *Dialogues of the Buddha*, p. xxv. f.; *Buddhist Psychology*, p. 250 ff. The passages bearing on the non-existence of an *ego* are collected in Warren, p. 129 ff. One of the most definite is from the *Visuddhi-Magga*, ch. xviii. :—

'Just as the word "house" is but a mode of expression for wood and other constituents of a house, surrounding space in a certain relation, but in the absolute sense there is no house . . . in exactly the same way the words "living entity" and "Ego" are but a mode of expression for the presence of the five attachment groups, but when we come to examine the elements of being one by one, we discover that in the absolute sense there is no living entity there to form a basis for such figments as "I am," or "I"; in other words, that in the absolute sense there is only name and form. The insight of him who perceives this is called knowledge of the truth.

'He, however, who abandons this knowledge of the truth and believes in a living entity must assume either that this living entity will perish or that it will not perish. If he assume that it will not perish, he falls into the heresy of the persistence of existences; or if he assume that it will perish, he falls into that of the annihilation of existence. . . . To say "The living entity persists" is to fall short of the truth; to say "It is annihilated" is to outrun the truth.'

through many births. In fact, since the mode of combination of the skandhas undergoes incessant change, the living being of the present moment is not, strictly speaking, the same as in the moment past or in the moment of the future.[1] This last speculation however, which is in reality only the logical conclusion of the doctrine of the *skandhas*, is probably a later refinement.

The five groups are sometimes classified into two divisions, *rūpa* or form standing over against the other four, which are collectively termed *nāma*. The living being is then said to consist of *nāmarūpa*, name and form.[2] The former includes all the mental and subjective qualities, the latter the external bodily or objective; *rūpa*, therefore, it is evident, must always be present in any individual existence, but not necessarily all or each of the *nāma* group. From the latter moreover, the mental group, it is possible for the wise and self-restrained man to win freedom in the present life. Not so with respect to the 'form' group. From this deliverance only comes at the moment of death.

The dissolution of the *skandhas* which takes place at death is immediately followed by a reconstitution. Thus a new individual arises in this or in some other world through the **Karma** combining together afresh of the groups whose union had been momentarily broken up. The link between successive existences, between the new and the old, is *karma*, action, or rather,—since the word is without an English equivalent,—action together with all its inevitable consequences, good and evil. The individual perishes, utterly and for ever; but his *karma* lives on, and by its power is

[1] *Visuddhi-Magga*, viii.

[2] Cp. *Milinda-panha*, ii. 2. 6; *SBE*, xxxv., p. 71 f.

effected a re-combination of the *skandhas* in a new living being, who is heir to the accumulated effects of all the actions of his predecessors, or, as it may be more loosely expressed, of his own deeds in former existences. There is however, strictly speaking, no 'self' which passes from the one existence into the other. Only *karma* continues. And as long as *karma* is unexhausted, so long by an inevitable law will the series of re-births persist, each new life being the direct consequence of the activities bodily and mental of the preceding. There is a real break in the continuity of existence; and this break explains the loss of all memory of the events of previous lives. But the effects of all action pass from one to the other, and in the new existence the penalty must be paid for former wrong-doing, even as the reward will be reaped for kindly and virtuous deeds. The Buddhas however, being possessed of omniscience, are acquainted with and can recall the occurrences not only of their own former existences, but those also of others.

Re-Birth

It is evident therefore how widely, in spite of superficial resemblance, the Buddhist theory of re-births differs from the Hindu doctrine of metempsychosis or transmigration. In Buddhism there is no spirit or soul, no *ātman* or self, that can 'migrate.' All is purely mechanical, the result of self-acting laws, which neither require nor submit to interference from without; and on such principles a doctrine of transmigration, which postulates a soul or spirit that persists through all bodily changes, is meaningless. Into the origin or meaning of these laws the Buddha did not stay to inquire. If the accounts given by the Buddhist historians and commentators themselves are to be accepted, he distinctly set aside all such

inquiries as irrelevant, refused to be drawn into metaphysical discussions, and in effect declared that these and similar questions were beyond the lawful scope, if not beyond the competence of the human intellect. A further element of difference consisted in the limitation of the possibilities of re-birth to the six orders of living beings. The Hindu theory, which extends indefinitely downwards the limits of conscious life, so as to include plants and stones and the humblest objects of creation, has no counterpart in Buddhism.

Escape from Re-Birth

From this dependence of re-birth upon karma acting on and through the skandhas it at once follows that a way of escape from existence with its attendant evils lies open, if the power of karma can be broken and its effects cease to operate. If the force which compels a reconstitution of the elements of being can be destroyed, there will be no coming together again of the skandhas, and no renewal of existence after death. This then is theoretically the aim of every sincere and devout Buddhist, to extricate himself from the mechanical round of re-births, to break the chain of karma, so that the bitter fruits of action may cease to be gathered, and he may reach a state of untroubled and serene repose. The means by which the end may be attained is to be found in the Noble Eightfold Path.[1] He who has become enlightened, knows and endeavours to tread in this path, has escaped from the ignorance which is the root of all misery, and has entered upon the road which leads to rest, to *nirvāṇa*. The ignorance which is thus the spring and cause of all suffering is not of course ignorance in general, but ignorance of the special

[1] *supra*, p. 512 f.

truths which the Buddha taught. Destroy ignorance, and the process of karma will be arrested, there will be no more fruit of action, and therefore for that individual no further re-birth. Hence ignorance is the first term in the Chain of Causation[1]; 'on ignorance depends karma.' It is however expressly laid down that ignorance is not an uncaused primary cause; ignorance 'arises,' and itself has a cause. For all practical purposes, however, ignorance stands at the beginning, the *fons et origo* of all. With regard to that which lay behind and beyond the Buddha forbade his followers to speculate:—

> 'As I have told you, O monks, the first beginning of ignorance cannot be discerned, nor can one say "Before a given point of time there was no ignorance, it came into being afterwards." Nevertheless, O monks, it can be discerned that ignorance possesses a definite dependence.'[2]

A similar statement is made with regard to the craving for existence, the second starting-point in the Chain of Causation.[3] And it is further explained that ignorance is the cause of the karma, which results in unhappy states of existence, and craving or desire of that karma which leads on the contrary to happy states.

Different Kinds of Karma

The Buddha however was not so unreasonable as to demand from his followers abstinence from all action as the necessary condition under which they might make for themselves a way of escape from the circle of re-births. Nor did he for a moment profess himself to practise such abstinence. The obvious objection to his doctrine that abstinence to this extent was impracticable was met by the

[1] *supra*, p. 515 ff.

[2] *Visuddhi-Magga*, xvii.; Warren, p. 170 ff.

[3] Cp. *supra*, p. 518 f.

explanation that *karma* is of different kinds. Some actions are meritorious, and others the contrary; some kinds of karma are reproductive, while others are unreproductive and barren; in some instances karma depends directly upon ignorance, elsewhere other immediate causes are in operation.[1] The significant and most important distinction, therefore, as regards the future is this, that not all actions entail results which must be worked out in a new life. Actions performed without craving or 'attachment' do not give rise to a reconstitution of the *skandhas*, and so do not issue in another existence. They are 'barren,' not 'fruitful'; and as far as the future is concerned, it is immaterial whether they are performed or not. Through the teaching of the Buddha this freedom from craving may be gained; and what is thenceforth done by the saint or enlightened man produces no consequences in another birth. The works however of ordinary men are joined with ignorance and attachment, and cause trouble and suffering after death. This subject, admittedly a difficult one, is repeatedly discussed in the Buddhist books :—

'This truth, Ānanda, that on attachment depends existence is to be understood in this way. Suppose, Ānanda, there were utterly and completely no attachment at all of any one to anything, as namely the attachment of sensual pleasure, the attachment of heresy, the attachment of fanatical conduct, the attachment of the assertion of an Ego;—if there were nowhere any attachment, pray, on the cessation of attachment would there be any existence?'

'Nay, verily, Reverend Sir.'

'Accordingly, Ānanda, here we have in attachment the cause, the occasion, the origin, and the dependence of existence.'[2]

[1] See Warren, pp. 179 ff., 245 ff., 495 f.

[2] *Mahā-Nidāna-Sutta*, 245, 1; Warren, p. 205.

There are three conditions, O monks, under which deeds are produced. And what are the three? Covetousness hatred and infatuation are the three conditions under which deeds are produced.

When a man's deeds, O monks, are performed through covetousness hatred or infatuation, are caused by or originate in covetousness etc., wherever his personality may be, there those deeds ripen, and wherever they ripen, there he experiences the fruition of those deeds, be it in the present life, or in some subsequent one.

. . . . . .

There are three conditions, O monks, under which deeds are produced. And what are the three? Freedom from covetousness from hatred or from infatuation are three conditions under which deeds are produced.

When a man's deeds, O monks, are performed without covetousness hatred or infatuation, are caused or originate without covetousness etc., then, inasmuch as covetousness etc. are gone, those deeds are abandoned, uprooted, pulled out of the ground like a palmyra tree, and become non-existent and not liable to spring up again in the future. [1]

'Bhante Nāgasena,' said the king, 'are there any who die without being born into another existence?'

'Some are born into another existence,' said the elder, 'and some are not born into another existence.'

'Who is born into another existence, and who is not born into another existence?'

'Your majesty, he that still has the corruptions is born into another existence; he that no longer has the corruptions is not born into another existence.'

'But will you, bhante, be born into another existence?'

'Your majesty, if there shall be in me any attachment, I shall be born into another existence; if there shall be in me no attachment, I shall not be born into another existence.' [2]

'Bhante Nāgasena,' said the king, 'does a man know when he is not to be born into another existence?'

'Assuredly, your majesty, a man knows when he is not to be born into another existence.'

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[1] *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, iii. 33. 1; abbreviated from Warren, p. 215 ff.

[2] *Milinda-panha*, ii. 1. 6; *SBE*, vol. xxxv. p. 50.

'Bhante, how does he know it?'

'He knows it from the cessation of all cause or reason for being born into another existence.'[1]

'Bhante Nāgasena,' said the king, 'when you say "round of existence," what is that?'

'Your majesty, to be born here and die here, to die here and be born elsewhere, to be born there and die there, to die there and be born elsewhere,—this, your majesty, is the round of existence.'[2]

These truths it is the office of a Buddha to make known in the world, to preach anew doctrines which are as continually being overlooked and neglected. The external and individual means however, by which alone this wisdom can be apprehended, is intense concentration of mind and thought. This was of course a familiar Indian device, and no novelty as taught by Gautama. Every man must for himself assimilate the truths proclaimed, must work out his own salvation, must practise the meditation and self-culture which alone can lead to inward peace and deliverance from the bondage of karma and re-birth. He who has reached this state, wherein desire and lust have ceased to have power over him, and no renewal of existence will accordingly take place after death, is said to have attained *nirvāṇa*, a restful untroubled state, in which there is no more present or prospective misery and pain. To gain *nirvāṇa* was the goal which the Buddha set before his followers as the supreme end of their efforts and longings. It was clearly an end attainable in the present life. Gautama himself professed to be in enjoyment of *nirvāṇa*. And in the sacred books

Nirvāṇa

[1] *ib.*, ii. 2. 2; *SBE*, xxxv. p. 65.

[2] *ib.*, iii. 6. 9; *SBE*, xxxv. p. 120.

a similar claim is made for many of his early disciples.

To define more closely and to expound in psychological terms the nature of *nirvāṇa* is not easy. The word signifies literally 'blown out,' 'extinguished'; that is, the fire of lust, the clinging to existence. But in reality *nirvāṇa* is as highly technical a term as is to be found in the entire vocabulary of Buddhism; and upon its precise meaning and content much has been written. What *nirvāṇa* is not however can at once and very simply be stated. It is not extinction or annihilation; the latter idea is as foreign and inconceivable to Buddhist thought as it would be to modern science, although of course on different grounds. Neither is it a condition of mere trance or dreamless repose, in which all the activities of the body and mind are suspended. Either definition is incompatible with the claim to the enjoyment of *nirvāṇa* in the present life. But it is that condition of being in which all actions are performed without 'clinging' or 'attachment'; in which therefore no fruits of action are produced, *karma* is inoperative, and after their dissolution no re-combination of the elemental groups can occur.[1] The Buddhist saint who has attained *nirvāṇa* still acts and thinks. But his actions and thoughts end with themselves, and there is no aftermath. The terms in which this attainment is recorded are found repeated without essential variation in several passages of the sacred books.

[1] It is worth notice that the same conception of actions done 'without attachment' is found in the Hindu books; cp. *Bhagavad Gītā* iii. 19, 'A man performing action without attachment (*asakto hyācāraṅkarma*) attains the Supreme'; ix. 9, 'these actions do not fetter me, who remain like one unconcerned, and who am unattached (*asaktam*) to these actions.'

The venerable Sona remaining alone and separate, earnest, zealous, and resolved, attained ere long to that supreme goal of the higher life for the sake of which noble youths go out from all and every household gain and comfort to become houseless wanderers,—yea, that supreme goal did he, by himself, and while yet in this visible world, bring himself to the knowledge of, and continue to realise, and to see face to face! And he became conscious that re-birth was at an end, that the higher life had been fulfilled, that all that should be done had been accomplished, and that after this present life there would be no beyond.[1]

Beyond *nirvāṇa* moreover there is a further and final emancipation, which can only be reached at and through death. This is *parinirvāṇa*, complete nirvāṇa. At this stage the force of the strongest and most persistent of the skandhas, the *rūpa* or form-group, is finally broken. The other four,—sensation, perception, predisposition, and consciousness, collectively the name-group,—give place earlier; and from the yoke of these deliverance may be obtained in the present life. This state or condition of deliverance is *nirvāṇa*; and when it has once been reached, no re-combination of the skandhas is possible. There remains only the form-group. This last link with an organised body is dissolved in death.[2]

That the above is the doctrine of the sacred books and of the early Buddhist documents themselves can hardly be disputed. Whether they rightly interpret the mind of Gautama himself is another question. He is represented as consistently refusing to be drawn into metaphysical discussion on the subject of a future life. In effect he discourages and even forbids speculation, as a profitless occupation of time and thought which should rather be devoted to immediate self-improvement,

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[1] *Mahāv.*, v. 1. 18; cp. *C'ullav.*, xi. 1. 15, *Mahā-parin. Sutta*, v. 68.

[2] Cp. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 155 ff., and the whole section on 'Sentient Existence.'

the attainment of knowledge, and the faithful discharge of the duties of this life. On the other hand he does not in so many words declare that there is no hereafter for the *arhat*, the perfected saint, who has attained 'nirvāna upon earth'; nor does he statedly disclaim for himself, as a thorough-going agnostic position would imply, ignorance concerning the future, either his own or that of his disciples. He urges only that it is no immediate concern of theirs, to dream or speculate concerning it; let them do their duty in the present. Among the attributes also of a Tathāgata is that of omniscience, he is *sarvajña*; and there is no reason to suppose that Gautama meant to draw a line with regard to this one subject alone, and to intimate that here his omniscience failed him, and he was as ignorant as other men; although he refused for reasons assigned to communicate his knowledge to the disciples when they questioned him. If however the theory of the *skandhas* is original and primitive, and is to be applied with literal precision, then for a Buddha, as well as for ordinary men who by determination and the practice of virtue attain *arhatship*, there is no future of conscious existence. That future cannot be described as annihilation,—the phrase is meaningless on the principles and theory embodied in the scheme of the skandhas. Simply stated, the fact is that the processes of the renewal of life are arrested, there is no reconstitution into a conscious sentient being. The individual, whether Buddha or ordinary *arhat*, is not.

On broader grounds also it is doubtful whether so stern and unyielding a doctrine as this, a doctrine that holds out no promise of future happiness, but only the incessant renewal of the hard conflict with self until conscious life comes to an end in darkness, can ever have captured the mind and heart of the people, or been the theme and text of a popular and successful ministry, such as Gautama is represented as exercising. The ideas and definitions implied were of too abstract and metaphysical a nature to commend themselves to popular thought or belief. They represent more probably a later development of the study and the cloister, thrown back upon the time of the Buddha, which it was then sought to

invest with the authority of antiquity. And if so his attitude may have been really agnostic, refusing to speculate on a subject about which he had no definite or certain information to give. *Nirvāṇa* in the sense expounded by the books holds out no sufficient attraction to be the inspiring force of a great and enduring religious movement, such as Buddhism proved itself to be. And therefore in the later developments of doctrine and faith, especially in the Northern School, the conception of *nirvāṇa* was extended and elaborated into that of a real paradise, a happy state after death, the privilege and reward of a saintly life here upon earth, lived in obedience to the precepts and moral standards which Buddhism enjoined. Apart also from such development, which brought Buddhist teaching with regard to the future into touch with the deepest longings and consciousness of the human heart, it is hardly conceivable that Buddhism should ever have become a popular faith or exercised a wide and lasting influence.[1]

[1] The statement might be made even more positive and dogmatic in the light of history in general; cp. T. R. Glover, *Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*[3], p. 68. 'No religion apart from Buddhism has permanently held men which had no hopes of immortality.' The Buddhist faith is no exception to the rule which Dr. Glover expounds, but rather perhaps its strongest instance and support. *Practical* Buddhism, whatever the books might say, has found itself compelled to adopt and to teach that hope; and therein its adherents have found a consolation and strength in the distresses of life, which abstract doctrine could not afford. On the primitive teaching of the Buddha with regard to the future, see further the very able article of L. de la Vallée Poussin on 'Buddhist Agnosticism' in *ERE*, vol. i. p. 220 ff.

SCHOOLS AND SECTS

Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna

The two chief schools of Buddhist thought and practice are known as the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna, the 'Great' and the 'Little Vehicle' respectively. The sacred books and Canon of the former are written in Sanskrit, of the latter in Pāli, the language of the monasteries of Ceylon. Reference is frequently made to these schools under the names of Northern and Southern Buddhism, but the geographical line of demarcation is not quite coincident with that of doctrine. The system and teaching of the Mahāyāna are paramount in the countries bordering on India on the north; Tibet, Nepāl, Sikhim, and Bhutān, together with Mongolia and Central Asia. These, with countries of greater religious significance, China Japan and to a less extent Korea, to which may be added Java and parts of further India, form the wide home of a comprehensive Mahāyāna school. Its doctrines however made their way southwards, and exercised a not inconsiderable influence on the Buddhism of Ceylon and Burma. In the two last-named countries, and in Siam, the Hīnayāna school holds sway; but its doctrines were recognised as orthodox and authoritative, theoretically at least, in the north, and Pāli manuscripts have been found in Nepāl. It is only in a broad and general sense, therefore, that an abstract and agnostic philosophy may be said to be characteristic of the south, a florid theistic and polytheistic development of the north. The meeting-place of the two tendencies or schools, in which they took their rise and whence they diverged, was Northern India. As early as in the fifth century Fā-Hian found

the two schools existing there side by side, with rival though not hostile establishments, exercising apparently for the most part co-ordinate influence. Two centuries later in the time of Hiuen-Tsiang the progress of the Mahāyāna, and the increase in the number of its monasteries and adherents, with a corresponding falling away in the strength and prosperity of the rival community, was most marked. And the same causes appear to have continued to operate, although the steps of the process cannot be traced historically, until the Mahāyāna survived almost alone at least in the northern half of the peninsula, only to succumb in its turn before the absorbent power of the native Hinduism, and the compelling force of the Muhammadan invader.

Buddhist art and architecture therefore, as might be expected, are predominantly of Mahāyānist type. Greek influence came in with Alexander the Great and his successors, and under the so-called Indo-Scythian kings extended its influence far and wide over Central Asia as well as the north of India. The religious types and symbolism of the monuments are those of the Mahāyāna, and the deities depicted for the most part with little of individual characterisation belong to its pantheon. The scenes on the sculptures can often be identified as illustrating stories contained in the Jātaka; and these are found chiefly on ornamental stone railings surrounding the stūpas, and on richly carved stone gates, which give entrance to the enclosures.[1]

The doctrinal distinction between the two schools is very considerable, and in the details of practical observance and daily life there is much variety in the different Buddhist countries. The *Mahāyāna* system taught a kind of speculative theism, with which were united especially in Tibet elements of

[1] See A. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, London, 1901, and cp. Kern, p. 88 ff.; notices of Buddhist Art and Architecture will be found in various articles in *ERE*, vol. i. p. 695, and *ss.vv.* Burma, India, Tibet, etc.

mysticism and fable, derived in large part from the ancient popular religions of the country. This system was moreover tolerant, gentler and more human than its rival, the Hīnayāna; and permitted greater freedom to the individual, both in action and belief, than did the simpler agnosticism and stern but unattractive morality which claimed to represent primitive Buddhism. The name was therefore given to it of *Mahāyāna*, or the 'Great Vehicle,' because it offered to convey men to the desired haven under conditions which made the way easy for all; while the *Hīnayāna*, or 'Little Vehicle,' practically confined salvation to the elect few. Thus the spirit of the Mahāyāna, if more lax, was undoubtedly more liberal than that of the more formal and regulated doctrine of the Hīnayāna. And this characteristic appears in its many deities, who are compassionate and ready to exert themselves for the benefit of men; while the Hīnayāna system allows no place to hope of external aid, and bids a man rely entirely on his own unassisted efforts for deliverance.[1]

Doctrines of the Schools

The doctrines of the Hīnayāna school as perfected and practised in Ceylon received earlier and more detailed attention from European scholars than those of the Mahāyāna, and are generally and probably rightly regarded as more faithfully reflecting the teaching of Gautama himself. The more adequate study however that has been given within recent years to the Mahāyāna system, and especially to its literature, both in the original Sanskrit and in Chinese and other translations, has tended to emphasize its distinctness from the Hīnayāna, and to bring into prominence

[1] Kern, p. 124 f.; Waddell, *Buddhism of Tibet*, pp. 10 ff., 124 f.; Monier-Williams, pp. 158 ff., 188 f.

its close relationship to the great Hindu schools of philosophical thought in Northern India. There can be little doubt that the tradition is correct which ascribes to the tendencies and speculations which later were systematized in the Mahāyāna an early origin within two or three centuries of the death of the Buddha. On this account the claim of the Hīnayāna to represent 'primitive' Buddhism has been challenged by some scholars in the interests of its rival, and the former has been regarded as a Sinhalese modification of a doctrinal system, remoulded and transformed according to native Sinhalese conceptions. If this view were correct the Pāli literature would more justly be termed 'Ceylonese.' Beyond however the undoubted antiquity of the Mahāyāna there is little in its favour; and the Hīnayāna literature is certainly in its essential features of Indian origin.

The most distinctive doctrines of the Mahāyāna relate to the nature and being of the Buddha himself, and the existence and character and office of the Bodhisattvas.[1] The system is essentially idealistic and mystical, and like the Vedānta philosophy[2] regards the ultimate principle or source of all as beyond definition or knowledge, and to be apprehended only by spiritual intuition, not by the faculties of logic or intellect. The names assigned to this all-pervading energy and source of all, which is present in all creatures, even the most depraved, are various,—*Bodhi*, intellect; *dharma*, law or righteousness, virtue, sometimes rendered even by 'religion'; *śūnyatā*, nothingness; *bhūtatathātā*, 'suchness'; and even *nirvāṇa*.[3]

[1] *infra*, p. 578 ff.

[2] *supra*, p. 313 ff.

[3] *supra*, p. 531 ff.

The most characteristic and distinctive name however is *Dharmakāya*, the Body of Law, which is the essential principle of purity and righteousness, present everywhere throughout the universe. It is only the perfect-minded however who are capable of discerning the *dharmakāya*; for the hearts of ordinary men are so overlaid with self-love and ignorance that they cannot free themselves, except by a great effort, from the snares of worldliness and delusion. Knowledge itself also is distinguished as of two kinds or classes, illusory and absolute or perfect; by another school a third, relative knowledge, is inserted between the other two (*parikalpita*, *paratantra*, *pariniṣpanna*). The first is the ordinary belief based on sense-perceptions; the second corrects this by an intellectual assent to the doctrine of the merely relative existence of the universe, *i.e.* for all practical purposes the objects of the senses exist and may be known, although they have no true or absolute being; the third realises and understands that behind and above all there is an ultimate and animating principle, incapable of being defined or even adequately named, but transcending all, which alone is real and eternal. This perfect knowledge, the knowledge of the *Dharmakāya*, is that which leads to final deliverance and nirvāṇa.

Dharmakāya

In a Buddha alone does the Dharmakāya manifest itself in its fullness and perfection, unalloyed and untrammelled by ignorance (*avidyā*). In all other animate beings the presence and influence of the Dharmakāya is more or less hindered and marred by ignorance and sin, which hold them fast in the bonds of *karma*, and prevent their escape from the cycle of becoming (*saṁsāra*) and rising to the

apprehension of the true and only reality. It is in this work of securing final emancipation for all beings that the Bodhisattvas lend effectual aid. They voluntarily transfer to others the virtue of their store of accumulated merit, and delay their own entrance into *nirvāṇa*, that they may help others who are still struggling and striving to win salvation. The teaching concerning the office and work of the Bodhisattvas constitutes indeed one of the most striking differences between the two great Buddhist schools. In the Hīnayāna each man's deliverance depends upon his own unaided efforts; in the most literal sense of the word he must work out his own salvation, none helping or being capable of helping him in his endeavour. The Mahāyāna provides for all liberal and efficient assistance from beings who are full of compassion and the most strenuous zeal. Every man moreover may become a Bodhisattva, and devote himself with earnestness and love to the wellbeing of his fellow creatures. A formal progress or graduated ascent consisting of ten stages (*bhūmi*) was defined, through which the aspirant to Bodhisattvaship worked his way to final self-renunciation, devotion, and bliss.[1] Probably the full number of ten was developed from an originally simpler series involving a less number of stages. This hypothesis, if it may be assumed to be well-founded, would explain in part at least the apparent inconsequent nature of the succession and character of the *bhūmis*.

[1] The stages are (1) *pramuditā*, rejoicing; (2) *vimalā*, stainless; (3) *prabhākarī*, radiant; (4) *arcismatī*, resplendent; (5) *sudurjayā*, wellnigh invincible; (6) *abhimukhī*, facing towards; (7) *dūraṅgamā*, departing to a distance; (8) *acalā*, immovable; (9) *sādhumatī*, excellent; (10) *dharmameghā*, cloud of dharma, or the law. They are enumerated, for example, in *ERE*, ii. p. 743 ff.; Suzuki, chap. xii.

Besides the *Dharmakāya*, the Buddha is said to be possessed of, or to manifest himself in, two other forms, the *Sambhogakāya*, or body of bliss, and the *Nirmāṇakāya*, the illusory or apparitional body. The last was the form under which he appeared on earth and to the eyes of men. The 'body of bliss' was conceived in a mystical sense, and apparently different meanings and values were attached to it. Essentially the sambhogakāya, however, is the form under which the Buddha manifests himself in Paradise (*sukhāvatī*) to the assembled Bodhisattvas. This theory of the *Trikāya*, the threefold body of the Tathāgata, has sometimes been referred to as the Buddhist doctrine of the Trinity. There is little real resemblance however to the Christian doctrine.[1]

Sambhogakāya : Nirmāṇakāya

The rise of the two schools, their historical beginnings and growth, can only be doubtfully traced. If the heretical views maintained and condemned at Vaiśālī actually resulted in the formation of an independent sect, then the Mahāyāna may perhaps be regarded as a development of the school or party of the Mahāsaṅghikas.[2] In the later Councils again of Patna and Jālandhara, it is possible to recognise partisan assemblies, connected the former with Hīnayāna, the latter with

Origin of Mahāyāna School : Nāgārjuna

[1] See L. de la V. Poussin, arts. *Adibuddha*, *Bodhisattva*, in *ERE*, vols. i. and ii. ; Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 197 ff. ; D. T. Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, London, 1907.

[2] *supra*, p. 452 f. ; Hiuen-Tsiang gives a different account of the origin of the 'Great Assembly,' *Siyuki*, ii. p. 164 f. Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, pp. 149 n., 182 f., records a further tradition according to which the school did not arise until 160 years after the death of the Buddha. Cp. Kern, p. 105 ff.

Mahāyāna teaching and tendencies. It was still later that the Chinese monks and pilgrims found the two schools existing and flourishing side by side, each with large monasteries and many adherents; but the general movement was already apparent in favour of the more popular system. In the early traditional history of the Mahāyāna, the most prominent figure is *Nāgārjuna*, who is often regarded as its founder. He was the thirteenth or fourteenth in succession of the Buddhist patriarchs, Mahā Kaśyapa, the President of the Rājagṛiha Council, being the first. The former probably lived about the middle of the second century of our era; and he is recorded to have been pupil and successor of Aśvaghosha, the well-known author of the Buddhaćarita, and to have studied at the Buddhist monastery at Nālanda. Nāgārjuna taught, or is said to have taught, a 'Middle Way' between the doctrines of the reality and of the deceptiveness or illusory character of existence; and to have given to his system therefore the name of *Mādhyamika*, or *Mādhyamayāna*, the 'Middle Vehicle.' The latter name is known and recognised in Tibet, but not elsewhere.[1] His authorship is claimed for the well-known Mahāyānist work the *Prajñā-Pāramitā*, 'perfection in wisdom,' containing mystical teaching on the origin and nature of being.[2] He is further said to have travelled extensively in

[1] Waddell, *ll. supra cc.*; Legge, *Fā-Hien*, p. 14; Kern, p. 122 f.; cp. L. de la V. Poussin in *JRAS*, 1906, p. 951 and note, and a review of this author's translation of the *Bodhićaryāvatāra*, *ib.* 1908, p. 583 ff.

[2] The Sanskrit form of the text has been published by Max Müller in *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, Aryan Series, vol. i. pt. 3; and translated in *SBE*, vol. xlix. The translator refers to it as 'the most widely read Buddhist text in Japan.' Cp. Waddell, pp. 11, 125.

Southern India, and to have held the office of patriarch for no less than sixty years.[1]

Spirit of the Schools: the Mahāyāna and Christianity

In a broad sense therefore the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism was characterised by a more humane and liberal spirit than that of its rival in the South. It recognised and made provision for the weakness of human nature, and set before men a realisable goal of blessedness, in the attainment of which, as well as the journey thereto, help was at his disposal from the heavenly powers, who interested themselves actively in his welfare. It was indeed the chief and most distinctive attribute of these, that they exhibited compassion towards the suffering of the world of men, and devoted their energy to its alleviation.[2] And if the teaching of the school in the various countries to which it spread, and especially its painting and art, elaborated the horrors of the hells, it was in order to deter men from the life of selfishness and injustice which must inevitably find its close in them, while depicting at the same time with equal or even greater fervour the joys of that heaven which awaited the true worshipper after death. How far these views and doctrines of the Mahāyāna were the product of independent Indian thought, working on Indian soil, or how far the influence of Christian missionaries and teaching co-operated with and modified an indigenous system transplanted to other lands,

[1] Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 192 ; A. Lloyd, *Creed of Half Japan*, ch. xii. ; Suzuki, *op. cit.*, pp. 94 f., 103, 168 f., 292 ff., 297.

[2] Cp. L. de la Vallée Poussin, art. *Bodhisattva*, in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 749 f. : 'Virtue of giving (*dāna*) or compassion (*karuṇā*, *kṛipā*), or, if the term be preferred, of charity, is . . . the cardinal principle in the career of the Bodhisattva.'

it is difficult perhaps impossible to determine. In Tibet and Central Asia, in China, probably in North India itself, and according to the tradition as far west as Egypt, Buddhism was in close and uninterrupted contact with forms of Christian teaching and practice, chiefly Nestorian, during the early centuries of our era. The history of the mutual influence which the two faiths exercised on one another has never been written, and perhaps never can be. That the influence however was profound and lasting no close student of the spirit and characteristics of the religions can doubt. In considerable part at least the Mahāyāna owes that which is distinctive of it as compared with the Hīnayāna to the presence and perpetuation of an element which it has received from Christian precept and example. With the exception perhaps of certain forms of Vaishnavite doctrine in India and of neo-Hindu developments which are avowedly based upon New Testament teaching, it possesses more of the mind of Christianity and is more in sympathy with its spirit than any other known religious system.

Philosophical Schools

The names are recorded of eighteen schools or sects of Buddhists existing in India in the early centuries of the Christian era. This number is given for example by Hiuen-Tsiang,[1] and in the Ceylon chronicles. In the *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha*[2] also, dating from the middle of the fourteenth century, a brief epitome of Buddhist views is included in the summary of Indian philosophies. In many instances however these sects are little

[1] Beal, i. p 80.

[2] 'Collection' or 'review of all opinions,' by Mādhavāćārya, translated by E. B. Cowell and A. E. Gough, 2nd ed., London, 1894. See the account of the 'Bauddha' system, p. 12 ff.

more than names to modern students, and have left no direct descendants either in the north or south. The differences between them were largely metaphysical, and subordinate to the great division into the two schools of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, to one or other of which they were attached. That the precise number moreover was ill-defined, and depended more upon the mode of enumeration than upon any broad and generally recognised distinctions, is shown by the fact that reference is sometimes made to thirty-two sects, and in one passage at least the existence of ninety-six is asserted. The four principal schools of thought, of which the others were apparently sub-divisions, were the *Mādhyamika* and *Yogāćāra*, belonging to the Mahāyāna, and the *Vaibhāshika* and *Sautrāntika*, which adhered to the Hīnayāna. The *Vaibhāshika* traced its origin back to Rāhula, son of Gautama; the Sautrāntika to a renowned teacher Kumāralabdha, a contemporary of Nāgārjuna in the second century; both therefore claimed for themselves a high antiquity. The two first systems taught a more or less consistent and complete idealism, and though technically Mahāyānist, occupied in reality a position nearer to the agnostic views of primitive Buddhism. According to the *Mādhyamika* school nothing really exists, all things including nirvāṇa itself are *māyā*, illusion. The *Yogāćāra* system allows the existence of *vijñāna*, consciousness, but of nothing else besides; its adherents have therefore been named *Vijñānavādins*, or Sensationalists. It is said to be essentially the system expounded by Aśvaghosha, the contemporary of Kanishka.[1] These two were in close

[1] See L. de la Vallée Poussin in *JRAS*, 1906, pp. 951 n. 2, 952 f.; art. *Aśvaghosha* in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 159 f.

relations with the Hindu philosophical schools of the Vedānta and the Yoga respectively. The *Vaibhāshika* and *Sautrāntika* expounded a realist, or as it has been termed 'presentationalist' philosophy, teaching that the universe with all its phenomena had an actual and real existence. They differed in the method by which they supposed this universe to be apprehended by the senses; the former asserting that objects are known immediately and in themselves, the latter mediately and through the intervention of images.[1] With regard also to the canonical Scriptures these two schools were at variance. The adherents of the Vaibhāshika acknowledged the authority of the Abhidharma but rejected the Sūtras; their opponents reversed the order, accepting the Sūtras but refusing the Abhidharma. Of the sub-divisions, those of the Vaibhāshika appear to have been the most important. They were four in number, namely Sarvāstivādin, they who assert the reality of all existence; Mahāsāṅghika; Sammatīya, said to have been founded by Upāli, one of the earliest and chief disciples of the Buddha; and Sthavira. Of the two first-named, Fā-Hian records that he found copies of their rules in the Mahāyāna monastery at Patna, which he transcribed and translated into Chinese; and there also was a copy of the Vinaya according to the Mahāsāṅghika recension, which he describes as the 'most complete' of all the versions in the possession of the eighteen sects.[2]

Other systems of classification of the schools of Buddhism are described by Rockhill, *Life of the*

[1] Compare the curious parallel in the difference of views of the Vadagalais and Tengalais, *supra*, p. 377 f.; see also art. *Atomic Theory* (*Indian*) in *ERE*, vol. ii. p. 201 f.

[2] Legge, *Fā-Hien*, p. 98 f.

Buddha, ch. vi. His account is derived in the main from Tibetan translations of two Sanskrit works, the *Samavadhoparacha chakra* of Vasumitra, and the *Kayabhetro Vibhaṅga* of Bhavya. The two accounts are practically identical, and Mr. Rockhill adds comments and explanations from other authors. The schools are said to have originated about 160 years after the *parinirvāṇa*, in the schism of the Mahāsāṅghika and the Sthavira. It is explained that the former name was given on account of the number of adherents of the sect, the latter because it teaches that all *sthaviras*, or senior mendicants, are of the number of the elect. The *Sthaviras* are also known as *Haimavatas*, dwellers on Himavat, *i.e.* the Himālaya mountains. The Mahāsāṅghika school has eight sub-divisions: the Mahāsāṅghika proper, the Ekavyavahārika, the Lokottaravādin, 'those who say that the blessed Buddhas have passed beyond all worlds,'[1] the Bahuśrutīya, the Pradshnaptivādin, the Tchaityika, the Pūrvaśaila, and the Avaraśaila; the two last are dwellers on the Pūrva and Avara, or eastern and western hills (*śaila*). The Sthavira school has ten sub-divisions, of which the first is the Sthavira proper, or Haimavata; among the others are included the Vaibādyavādin, who affirm the existence of some things and deny the existence of others, the Sarvāstivādin, 'those who say that all exists,' the Sammatīya, and the Mahīśāsaka. The eight sects of the Mahāsāṅghika, together with the Sthavira, Sarvāstivādin, Mahīśāsaka and two others of the Sthavira school, are said to deny the existence of a self or soul (*anātmavādin*); the remaining five sub-divisions of the Sthavira teach

[1] Cp. L. de la V. Poussin, art. *Bodhisattva*, in *ERE*, vol. ii, p. 742b.

the existence of a *pudgala*, or soul, which is reconstituted with the skandhas to form the new individual. Deliverance from transmigration is explained to consist in the recognition of the permanence and independence of the pudgala,—in all which the influence of the Sāṅkhya philosophy is evident! A variant account begins with three schools, the Sthavira, Mahāsāṅghika, and Vaibādyavādin, with six, eight, and four sub-divisions respectively. Others again place the great schism 137 years after the death of the Buddha, and describe differently the gradual rise of the various schools, and the fundamental principles of their teaching.

> This philosophy of the schools flourished in Northern India from an early date to about the middle of the eighth century, and the dialecticians and thinkers of Buddhism appear to have contended on equal terms with their Brāhman rivals, and with the advocates of other schools and modes of thought. With disputants of Brāhmanism and Jainism, and even the Christian and Jewish professors, they are said to have come into conflict. During the seventh century also Buddhism was the prevailing religion of Kashmīr. Then a general decay set in, and the schools lost themselves in subtleties and internal rivalries; and the general causes which led to the disappearance of the Buddhist faith from India acted first of all on the life of thought and reason, which had found its expression in their discussions and activity.

The latest of the Chinese travellers, I-Tsing, belonged himself to the Sarvāstivādin school, of the practices of which his book is a minute account. He makes brief mention of the Mādhyamika and Yogāćāra, which he says are the only two schools of the Mahāyāna existing in India. His 'four principal schools of continuous tradition,' which he apparently intends it to be understood belonged to the Hīnayāna, correspond to the four sub-divisions above named; but the terms Vaibhāshika and

Sautrāntika are not met with in his work. The Sarvāstivādin sect was found to be the most influential and widespread, greatly predominating in the north of India, while the followers of the Sthavira were in the majority in the south. As to the difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, I-Tsing declares that both 'are perfectly in accord with the noble doctrine. . . . Both equally conform to truth and lead us to Nirvāṇa.' The only distinction which he names is that the former eschews the worship of Boddhisattvas and the reading of Mahāyāna sūtras, practices which by the latter are regularly and statedly observed.[1]

The differences between the four schools are summarily stated by Mādhavāćārya as follows :—

The Bauddhas are well known to be divided into four sects, the Vaibhāśikas and the rest.

The Vaibhāśika highly esteems an object concomitant to the cognition ;

The Sautrāntika allows no external object apprehensible by perception ;

The Yogāchāra admits only intellect accompanied with forms ;

The Mādhyamikas hold mere consciousness self-subsistent.

All the four (sects of) Bauddhas proclaim the same emancipation,

Arising from the extirpation of desire etc., the stream of cognitions and perceptions.[2]

[1] I-Tsing, Introduction, pp. 7 ff., 14 f.

[2] *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*, p. 35, A. E. Gough's translation.

MONASTICISM

THE most characteristic external feature of Buddhism is the *Saṅgha*, or Order of monks, which, modified and controlled by circumstances and by the disposition and habits of the people, has maintained itself in a more or less distinct form in every country in which the Buddhist faith has taken root. That this feature was really primitive, and not a later addition grafted on a philosophical stem, all available evidence tends to prove. The earliest Buddhist writings presuppose the existence of the Order, and found upon it their ecclesiastical system and rule. The address of the edict of king Aśoka[1] is to a community not recently called into being, but possessed of a recognised status and a collection of sacred books. And in creating or regulating an Order of monks the Buddha was only following Hindu precedent, and legitimising in his own economy a practice which was of very great antiquity in India, and had been made part of the discipline of every important Indian sect.

The *Saṅgha* formed with the Buddha himself and the Dharma or sacred Law a kind of Buddhist triad, sculptured representations of which have been found, whereon the Saṅghā is depicted as a man holding a lotus, the symbol of perfection and purity. This triad is the familiar Buddhist *triratna*, the 'three jewels,' or 'three honoured ones'[2] the type and pattern, as it would seem, of the later triads of the Mahāyāna. In popular usage and in course of time worship came to be paid to the members of the

[1] *supra*, p. 460 f.

[2] See the drawing of the sculpture from Buddha Gayā in Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 485, and cp. *ib.* p. 177 note; Kern, pp. 88, 134; Waddell, p. 388.

triad, personified, both collectively and in their individual capacity.[1]

The Saṅgha

Gautama Buddha, moreover, enjoined renunciation of the world as a necessary condition of salvation. The earliest Buddhist community, therefore, was conceived as a religious order of men who were striving to attain the perfect life, and who as a means to that end had withdrawn themselves from the world and worldly desires. The canonical books also made provision from the beginning for the rule and mode of life of the members of the Order. This idea of separation from the world as a step towards spiritual enlightenment was not of course peculiar to Buddhism; it was familiar to the thought and practice of the rival Brāhmanical schools. In the Buddhist scheme however it was more completely organised, and made the centre and mainspring of a great ecclesiastical system. The members of the Saṅgha were termed *Bhikshus* or beggars; a name that amongst the Brāhmans was already employed technically to denote one who had entered upon the fourth *āśrama* or period of life, and was dependent for his livelihood entirely upon alms. No caste restrictions were placed upon entrance to the Order, although the greater number of the early members appear to have been Brāhmans. By the side of the monks there was established also an order of nuns, or *Bhikshunīs*; the foundation of which, although carried back by tradition to Gautama himself, must probably be ascribed to a later age.[2] Outside of both was the community

[1] See art. 'Images and Idols (Buddhist),' in *ERE*, vol. vii.

[2] The tenth book of the *C'ullavagga* prescribes the duties and obligations of nuns, and relates the circumstances of the admission of women to the privileges of 'the homeless state under the

of laymen. Thus the whole ecclesiastical system existed for and was subservient to the monk.

Within the Saṅgha itself the only distinctions recognised were those of age and merit. The elders or *Sthaviras* governed; the *Śrāmaneras*,[1] the novices or younger monks, were required to observe vows of abstinence and to pledge themselves to implicit obedience. In ordinary cases a novice might only be admitted with the consent of his parents, and not before the age of fifteen.[2] At first the Buddha personally received all candidates into the Order; later however he gave to the monks themselves the right to admit new members and to confer ordination, provided it were done formally and in a regularly constituted assembly.[3] The preliminary form of admission of the novice was termed *pravrajyā*, a going forth, or retirement from the world. The ceremony appears at first to have been confined to a repetition of the 'three-refuge' formula: I come for refuge to the Buddha, the Law, and the Order![4] and implied perhaps on the part of the boy or his guardians no more than a

Rules of Admission

doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Blessed One.' Eight 'chief rules' are laid down for their behaviour, especially towards the monks, and forms of admission similar to those in force in the male Saṅgha are appointed. The Buddha also is represented as consenting reluctantly to the request made on their behalf, and as prophesying the earlier extinction of the true religion in consequence of the permission given to women to retire from the world. *SBE*, xx. p. 320 ff.; Warren, p. 441 ff.

[1] From the root *śram*, to exert oneself, to do penance or practise austerities.

[2] *Mahāv.*, i. 50 f., 54.

[3] *ib.*, i. 12, 28, 29.

[4] *Buddham śaranam gaćchāmi, Dharmam śaranam gaćchāmi, Saṅgham śaranam gaćchāmi.*

determination at some future time to become a monk.[1] Later there were imposed upon them as upon the monks generally ten vows of abstinence, called the ten precepts, as follows: abstinence from destroying life, from theft, from impurity, from falsehood, from strong drink; abstinence from eating at forbidden times, from dancing singing music and spectacles, from garlands scents and finery, from high or broad couches, and from receiving gold or silver.[1] The first five abstinences were incumbent also upon Buddhist laymen. The second ceremony of initiation, which was the true ordination, was termed *upasampadā*, and in order to be eligible for this the candidate must have already received *pravrajyā*, and must be twenty years old.[2] The ordained monk became at once entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Order, and was provided with the usual alms-bowl and yellow vestments. The material and form of his clothing were carefully prescribed, and the outer robes at least were to be made in patches, like the rice-fields of Magadha.[3] It was then necessary for him to spend five years under a teacher, acquainting himself with all the details of doctrine and discipline. Besides the alms-bowl, the monk carried with him a razor and a water-strainer, the latter in order to avoid the sin of destroying any living thing while drinking; in later times also a rosary.

The monks were accustomed to live in communities, originally in the open air without fixed abode or in simple mud huts, but later in large and

[1] *Mahāv.*, i. 56; cp. Kern, p. 76 ff., Monier-Williams, p. 126.

[2] *Mahāv.*, i. 49. 6; a detailed account of an ordination service held at Kandy will be found in Warren, p. 393 ff.

[3] *Mahāv.*, viii. 12.

elaborate monasteries, termed *vihāras*.[1] These existed in large numbers in the north of India, and were in many instances at least the homes of learning and studious research, as the great Buddhist monastery of Nālanda, and of a simple and unpretending piety. The rules and manner of life were framed on the model of the numerous monastic communities which had always been a prominent feature of the life of the Hindu religious sects.

Life and Occupations

The time of the monks was to be spent in meditation, in reciting and hearing prayers, and in the daily rounds to beg for food, for which however they were not allowed to make any request, as did the Brāhman students or ascetics. If it were given them voluntarily, they were to accept it with gratitude; if not, they moved on to another house. During *Vassa*, the season of the rains, they were forbidden to travel, except for short distances and on urgent business, lest their feet should crush and destroy animal life. The time for entering upon *Vassa* and the length of the period of retreat varied in different countries. In Ceylon it lasts for three months, and by a curious inversion of the original order and purpose, the monks then leave their monasteries, and either visit by invitation the house of some rich patron, or dwell in specially constructed sheds or booths.[2] Twice a month the Pātimokkha was to be recited, on the *Uposatha* days, the days of abstinence or fasting, and in the presence

[1] Whence the name of the district in Bengal, *Behar*, the land of monasteries. The word came to be used also to denote a temple.

[2] *Mahāv.*, iii. 1 ff.; compare Copleston, *Buddhism in Ceylon*,[2] pp. 129 f., 261 f.

of at least four monks.[1] A simple and moral life was enjoined upon all with contentment and cheerfulness; and all alike were bound by a strict vow of poverty.

Monasteries

Although however the individual monk thus pledged himself to a life of simplicity and self-denial, no restriction was placed on the wealth or possessions that the monasteries might as corporations hold. In early and mediaeval India especially the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims prove the great extent and influence of these institutions, which rivalled in power the religious orders of the Middle Ages in Europe. In Nepāl at the present time the rule of celibacy or of life in a monastery is no longer observed. The Buddhist preachers are married, and live as ordinary men. Sikhim appears to have received its Buddhism from Tibet, and its monks are adherents of the orthodox Tibetan church. In neither of these countries therefore is there present any distinctive or peculiar feature of monastic life.

Monastic History in Ceylon

In Ceylon Buddhism appears to have always been of a more reserved and austere type than in North India and the countries beyond. The Sinhalese chronicles however record a period of great prosperity and magnificence under the rule of the native kings, who are represented as enthusiastic promoters of the Buddhist faith; when the monasteries of the northern part of the island especially rivalled those of India, both in influence and in reputation for learning and sanctity. In the tenth century the progress and supremacy of Buddhism began to be interrupted by the Tamil invasions from South India, which brought with them

[1] *Mahāv.*, ii. 4. 14, 26 ff.; *supra*, p. 479.

Hindu beliefs and practices; and in course of time the entire northern half of the island was overrun by the people from the mainland, who destroyed the monasteries, and slew or expelled the monks. There was a brief revival of national prosperity, and with it of the national religion, under Parākrama the Great (*ob. c.* 1197 A.D.), who repelled the attacks of the Tamils, re-establishing the native sway, and is said to have carried the war even into South India itself. After his death national and religious decay proceeded more rapidly, and although peace and religious freedom were guaranteed with the advent of the British at the close of the eighteenth century, Buddhism showed little vitality or recuperative power. Within the last few years alone have there been signs of a renewed interest, and of zeal for the preservation and extension of the national faith.

Ceylonese Sects

There are three distinct sects of Buddhists recognised in Ceylon, who differ only in matters of discipline and outward observance. Their origin is due apparently in all instances to foreign influence. They are known as the Siamese, Rāmanya or Rangoon, and Amarapura (Upper Burma), the first-named being the most numerous and influential. A fourth sect, the Kelani, is sometimes distinguished, but it is said to be purely provincial, and to differ in no respect from the Siamese. The Amarapura sect was derived from the Siamese about the beginning of the nineteenth century, the latter having been established some fifty years earlier by a number of monks from Siam, who were brought over to Ceylon to restore, it is said, the true succession which had been lost. The Rāmanya is the most recent, and numerically the least important of the sects; it originated in a protest against laxity of manners

and observance, which had made its way into the other two. Outwardly the sects differ in the manner in which the yellow robe is worn, the Amarapura and the Rāmanya drawing it over both shoulders, while the Siamese leave the right shoulder uncovered. Both appeal to the sacred books in defence of their practice. The Rāmanya are more rigorous and exact in their observance of the vow of poverty, follow a simpler mode of life, and avoid with the greatest scrupulousness all contact with the idolatrous worship or customs of Hinduism. The monasteries of all sects are on a small and modest scale, rarely containing more than about twenty monks; and in the country districts frequently only two or three live together.[1]

Burmese Monastic Life

The monasteries in Burma also have been the home of religious learning, and for long provided the only instruction, secular or sacred, which was available in the entire country. Under the rule of the native kings, and by custom, every male Burman must at some time in his life be an inmate of a monastery. These were the only schools; and the pupils were taught to read and write Burmese, and to commit to memory a few Pāli texts. The instruction given however was often perfunctory; and in more recent years an increasing proportion of the Burmese youths enter the Government or Mission schools. Those who adopt the monastic profession for a fixed term of years or for life are termed *Pongyis*. Their time is spent in teaching, and in the service of the monasteries and temples.[2]

[1] Copleston, *Buddhism in Magadha and Ceylon*[2], ch. xxvii.

[2] Shway Yoe, *The Burman, his Life and Notions*[3], London, 1910, chh. ii., iv.; *ERE*, vol. v., *s.v. Education (Buddhist)*; *supra*, p. 499.

The most wealthy and powerful Buddhist communities are found in Tibet, where rich possessions in land and revenue are at the disposal of the monasteries. Primitive superstitions also, nature and devil worship, have there maintained a powerful hold on the people, and have so controlled and modified the religion of the Buddha that it is hardly recognisable. Tibetan ritual also, with its altars processions and incense, bears a striking resemblance to the forms of the Roman Catholic and Greek churches; and that this likeness is due to early Nestorian missionaries is now generally recognised. These men must have made their way as teachers and preachers into Tibet at a very early date; and the highly elaborate hierarchical system now existing owes much in its origin and direction to their example and instruction. The contrary influence however of native superstitions has been too strong in matters of belief. Between these two the simple characteristics of primitive Buddhism, which perhaps never had a real opportunity of establishing its hold upon the country, have been entirely overborne, so that Tibet is now probably the most superstitious and priest-ridden country in the world. 'Primitive Lāmaism may therefore be defined as a priestly mixture of Sivaite mysticism, magic, and Indo-Tibetan demonolatry, overlaid by a thin varnish of Mahāyāna Buddhism. And to the present day Lāmaism still retains this character.'[1]

Buddhism in Tibet

The monks in Tibet bear the name of *Lāmas*, 'lofty' or 'superior ones.'[2] It is said that from

[1] Waddell, p. 30.

[2] *ibid.*, p. 28. Dr. Waddell's is the standard and exhaustive work on the religion of Tibet, and is profoundly interesting to the student of religious thought and practice. To it I am chiefly

12 to 20 per cent. of the population are members of a monastic order. The highest Lāmas are believed to be re-incarnations of the Buddha himself; and on the death of one of these his spirit enters into some little child, who is then sought out, and brought to the monastery with much pomp and ceremony. There are two chief or 'Grand' Lāmas. The first and until recently supreme is the *Dalai* (or *Ta-le*), the 'vast' or 'ocean' Lāma, whose home and court were at Lhasa, whence as head of the Lāmaist church he was supposed to be absolute sovereign of the whole country, and through whom nominally the Chinese exercised their control.

Lāmas

In political affairs the Dalai Lāma for a considerable time past has never been more than a mere figure-head, under cover of whose name intrigues were carried on for the possession of temporal power. Care was taken that no occupant of the office should reach an age at which his preference and will might become a determining factor in the designs and schemes of the court officials. The recent troubles of the country are said to be due in part at least to the fact that the present Dalai Lāma had succeeded in outliving the brief span of years permitted to his immediate predecessors, and was beginning to assert himself in the counsels of State.[1]

Dalai Lāma

indebted for the following account. Compare the same author's *Lhasa and its Mysteries*, London, 1905; S'rī S'arat C'handra Dās, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, Calcutta, 1893; W. W. Rockhill, *Land of the Lāmas*, London, 1891. Dr. Waddell accompanied as chief medical officer the British expedition to Lhasa in 1903–4 under Colonel Younghusband, and has had exceptional opportunities for studying the religious beliefs and observances of the Tibetan people.

[1] On the temporal power of the Dalai Lāmas cp. also an article (transl.) by L. de Milloué in *IA* xxxiii. (1904) p. 309 ff.

The earliest Grand Lāma was established on the throne in 1252 by Kublai Khan, the Mongolian Emperor of China, and belonged to the original or 'red-cap' order of monks,[1] whose chief monastery was at Sakya, in Western Tibet. His descendants and successors held sway for about four centuries, and were then succeeded by the reformed or 'yellow-cap' party, whose high-priest became chief Lāmā, after their opponents had been expelled with the help of an armed Tartar force. It was he who adopted the title of *Dalai*, great or vast as the ocean. The late Dalai Lāma, who by his violence and intrigues with Russia brought about his own deposition, is the thirteenth in the succession, and it is curious to note that half a century ago a tradition was current in Lhasa itself that the transmigrations of the Grand Lāma would last only through thirteen generations. Born in 1876 he fled from Lhasa on the approach of the British in 1904, and was formally deposed in the autumn of the year by order of the Emperor of China. For more than five years he remained in exile at Urga in Mongolia, during which period he paid a State visit to Pekin, and was received by the Emperor. Later he was expelled by Chinese forces and took refuge in India, making his home in Darjiling. More recently he has been able to return to Tibet, and is endeavouring to re-establish his power and influence in his own country. Of the earlier Dalai Lāmas only one has ever been seen by an Englishman, by Mr. T. Manning in December, 1811[2]; and for the fifty years

[1] *infra*, p. 566 f.

[2] Waddell, *Lhasa*, p. 12 f. Manning appears to have left no complete account of his travels; the brief notes of his interview with the Lāma are quoted by Dr. Waddell, *l.c.* In Monier-Williams, *Buddhism*, p. 331 ff., there is an interesting account of the Dalai Lāma's reception of S'arat C'handra Dās.

preceding the British visit no European had set foot in Lhasa.

The second Grand Lāma is known as the *Tashi* or *Panchen* Lāma, the latter title signifying 'Great Doctor.'[1] His reputation for sanctity of character and life stands higher than that of his late rival of Lhasa, partly for the reason that being less involved in political or secular affairs he is supposed to be able to devote more time to his religious interests and to meditation. He is moreover more accessible to Europeans, and has on several occasions received the visits of British travellers. His chief monastery and place of residence is at Tashi-lhunpo, 'the mount of glory,' about 300 miles west by south of Lhasa. On the deposition of the Dalai Lāma he was appointed his successor and spiritual head of the Lāmaist church, and has since visited India, being received by the present king as Prince of Wales at Rawal Pindi in December, 1905, and entertained at Calcutta. All who came into contact with him were impressed by his gentleness and dignity, and he himself would carry away no less strong an impression of the wonders and wealth of the country which he had seen, especially of Buddh Gayā, and other sacred and historical centres of the Buddhist faith.

Panchen Lāma

A third Grand Lāma is the 'Bogdo' Lāma of Urga in North Mongolia, near the Koko Nor Lake, where a Russian official resides, and where he is therefore much more in touch with the outer world than the spiritual lords of Tibet. The line of Mongolian Lāmas derives its origin from Lhasa, and the title is said to have been conferred by the Dalai Lāma

Bogdo Lāma

[1] Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 234.

in 1653. The present holder of the office is the eighth in the succession, and was invested when only four years old, having been born in 1870, the son of an inferior minister or servant at the Lhasa court. He is married, and appears in public with his wife and child.[1]

Besides these three there are several other Grand Lāmas, less universally recognised and reverenced; one of whom resides at Pekin. After the Grand Lāmas come in regular gradation of office and rank the abbots, priests, deacons, and novices. The priest or monk corresponds to the bhikshu of India, the bhikkhu of Ceylon; he bears a title of equivalent meaning, *Ge-long*, is of at least twenty-five years of age, and is bound to observe all the rules of a fully ordained monk. The service of the monastery is completed by orders of lay brethren. Outside of all are the ordinary laity, the 'ignorant people,' or 'givers of alms.'

Tibetan Sects: Atīs'a

The numerous and varied sects of Lāmaism are said to have first arisen from a reforming movement initiated by Atīśa, a Buddhist monk from India, in the first half of the eleventh century. His tomb is shown at Nethang, near Lhasa, where he died 1052 A.D., and is described as being in a semi-ruinous state, in charge of a few monks, unworthy of the fame of the apostle of reformed Lāmaism.[2] The zeal of Atīśa was directed against

[1] C. W. Campbell, in *Geogr. Journal*, vol. xxii. (1903) p. 512. The late Dr. Sheepshanks describes an early visit to Urga and impressions of the Bogdo Lāma and his appearance and surroundings in *A Bishop in the Rough*, London, 1909. On Urga itself see Stanford's *Compendium of Geography, Asia*, vol. i. (1896), p. 391.

[2] Waddell, *Lhasa*, p. 320 f.; cp. Rockhill, pp. 225, 227.

the superstitions and practices of the ancient demonolatry, which had renewed their power over the people; and in his reform he aimed at the re-introduction of the Mahāyāna doctrines of a Buddhism of a purer and more ethical type. He is said to have been advanced in life when he first visited Tibet, having been born in Bengal in the year 980 A.D. The sect which he founded was known as the Kadampa, of which his chief disciple Danton was appointed the first president or head; and the Kadampa became ultimately the parent of all the reformed sects of the country.[1] Atīśa was believed to be an incarnation of *Mañjuśrī*, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom[2] and was himself the author or translator of many Buddhist and semi-Buddhist works.

Tson-khapa: The Gelugpa

The most important development of doctrine and practice however did not take place until more than three centuries later, when Tson-khapa, the most famous successor of Atīśa, revived and re-organised the sect or church which the latter had founded, and gave to it the title of Gelugpa, or 'the virtuous order.' Tson-khapa was a native of Tibet, born at Kumbum, in the province of Amdo, about the year 1355, and is said in his youth to have come under the influence of Roman Catholic missionaries. Like Atīśa he was a prolific writer, and many of the text-books of doctrine and ritual still in use are attributed to him. Like Atīśa also he was regarded as an incarnation of Mañjuśrī. The sect which he thus restored and purified became the established church of Tibet,

[1] Waddell, pp. 35 f., 54 ff.

[2] *infra*, p. 580

and through the Dalai Lāmas, the first of whom is said to have been his nephew, exercised supreme ecclesiastical power. The Gelugpa sect claims to have received doctrine and inspiration from Mañjuśrī, but also from Maitreya, the future Buddha.[1] The higher and purer standard of morality which at the first was professed and enforced within the Gelugpa appears to have been lost, and there is little now to distinguish them in any way from the other sects which have arisen from the reforming movement initiated by Atīśa.[2]

Reformed and Unreformed Sects

Of these reformed sects the *Kargyupa* and the *Saskyapa* or *Sakyapa* are the chief. Both were founded by pupils of Atīśa in the latter half of the eleventh century, and came under the inspiration of his teaching. They are more lax in their observances and mode of life than the later Gelugpa, and approach more nearly to the character of the old unreformed party. From them have arisen numerous sub-sects which differ in little but name. It is only the monks of the established church who practise abstinence, and keep the vow of celibacy. Those who adhered to ancient usages and refused to follow Atīśa bear the name of *Ninmapa*, or 'the old ones.' Among them customs of sorcery and demon worship, derived from native and pre-Buddhistic sources, are rife. Of all the Lāmaistic sects the Ninmapa is the furthest removed from primitive Indian Buddhism, and the most lax in belief and practice. The monks of 'the old school' are Buddhist or Lāmaist only in name, and their customs and worship represent

[1] *infra*, p. 578.

[2] Waddell, p. 58 ff.

in reality the ancient Bön superstitions and demonolatry of the country before it came under Buddhist influence. They pay reverence however to Padma Sambhava, the founder of Lāmaism, but in most respects both in observance and belief contrast strongly with the orthodox reformed sects.[1]

Robes

The robes worn by the members of the Order in Tibet are the three ordinary garments of a Buddhist monk, as prescribed by the Vinaya, with the addition of an undervest, trousers, and a hat. The colour however both of the robes and of the hat varies in the different sects. There is some evidence to show that even in the Southern church the distinctive Buddhist yellow is comparatively modern; and that in the Middle Ages in India the usual dress of the monk was red or reddish-brown.[2] In Tibet the Gelugpa alone, the established church, may wear yellow robes; although in their case also the usual colour

[1] Waddell, p. 72 ff. Compare C. A. Sherring, *Western Tibet*, p. 256:—'The Bompas . . . pre-Buddhist, are found in numbers east of Lhasa, but also throughout Tibet; in the west they are called Dubas, and are much feared by the people. They do everything in the reverse way to the orthodox; they go round Lake Manasarowar and Mt. Kailasa in the opposite direction (*i.e.* leaving it on their left), and even repeat *Om mani*, etc., beginning from the end. They are famous in Western Tibet as exorcists, etc.'

[2] Cp. Kern, p. 79; Waddell, p. 194 ff., with figures of the various kinds of hats worn. The change of colour from red to yellow is said to have been made by Tson-khapa. According to the author of the *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha*, 'The skin garment . . . and the red vesture are adopted by the Bauddha (*i.e.* Buddhist) mendicants.' In some ancient Sanskrit sūtras directions are given that the dress of the Brāhmanas is to be dyed red, the dye being made from the bark of a tree (Max Müller, quoting from the Āśvalāyana S'rauta sūtras, in *SBE* vol. xxxii. p. 234, cp. *ib.*, p. 232).

is red, but fastened by a yellow girdle. The hats differ in shape as well as in colour, and often convey by their form a symbolic or typical meaning. All the sects, with the exception of the Gelugpa, have red hats; and the monks therefore of this sect are distinguished as 'yellow hat,' while the original unreformed party, the Ninmapa, are the 'red hat.' The head-covering of the nuns is a skull-cap of red or yellow according to the sect.

In China Buddhism has become more consistently theistic or polytheistic, and has accepted more unreservedly the character of a religion rather than a philosophy. The date of its formal introduction into the country is given as 62 A.D.; but Buddhist missionaries from India are said to have made their way thither more than two centuries previous to this time. Here as in early India the religion of the Buddha found itself in presence of strong and firmly established rivals. Its history therefore has been a history of adaptation and compromise. Chinese Buddhism has taken under its protection native deities and forms of worship and belief, until it has lost all resemblance to the comparatively austere and simple system which Gautama expounded. The Buddhists of China are most liberal or lax in their creed and habits, and in many instances worship impartially at Taoist temples or Confucian shrines; while all alike pay honour to the tablets of their ancestors. The principal sect bears the name of the *Shin-shiu*, or sect of the 'Pure Land,' the western paradise of Amitābha; and was founded or established in the year 381 A.D. Its sacred books are the larger and smaller Sukhāvatī-vyūha.[1] The founder of the school and his disciples wrote a large

Buddhism in China

[1] *supra*, p. 492.

number of Buddhist treatises, and translated many works from the Sanskrit. A special feature of Chinese Buddhism has always been its numerous monasteries, in which rows of images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas sit impassive, and receive the worship and offerings of the faithful. Both the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna doctrines were introduced into the country, but the former never gained popularity, and the character of the religion in China has been almost entirely determined by Mahāyānist teaching, with which has been combined much that ultimately belongs to the lower forms of Indian religious belief, magic and idolatry, that made its way into China probably from Tibet and Nepāl. There is a varied and extensive Buddhist literature, consisting for the most part of renderings from the Sanskrit and commentaries, the contents of which are still imperfectly known.[1]

Japan

From China Buddhism was introduced into Japan in the year 552 A.D., but owing to the strong hold of *Shintoism*, the ancient native religion, upon the people, failed at first to make much progress. *Shintoism* is a kind of spirit worship, combining the worship of mythical heroes and ancestors with that of the powers of nature in an ancient and elaborate ritual.[2] In the ninth century a Buddhist monk named Kukai taught that the Shinto divinities were in

[1] See *Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka*, compiled by B. Nanjio, Oxford, 1883, and cp. S. Lévi in *IA*, xxxv. p. 23 ff. On Chinese Buddhism in general, De la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*[3], Tübingen, 1905, Band i. pp. 104–114, ii. pp. 117–122 with the references there given; E. H. Parker, *China and Religion*, London, 1905, ch. iv.

[2] *infra*, p. 675 ff.

reality incarnations of the Buddha; and this doctrine becoming widely accepted, the two sects lived and flourished side by side, mingling with one another, and frequently using their temples in common. The influence of Confucianism, on the other hand, with its code of practical ethics and strict rules of formal worship and observance, was distinctly inimical to the free speculation and idealism of Buddhist thought. The profession of Shintoism also, as the national faith, came to be identified with patriotism, and to forsake the ancestral religion was to be untrue to king and country; in 1868 it was formally adopted as the religion of the State, with a consequent acceleration of the decline of its rival, Buddhism. Both religions however were set free from State control in 1884, and there has recently been a considerable revival of Buddhist zeal. The period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries of our era may be regarded as the time when Buddhist popularity and influence were at their height.

Eleven or twelve principal sects[1] of Buddhism

[1] The list of these is given as follows by a native Japanese scholar. Those marked * are followers of the 'Pure Land' teaching; the years are the approximate or traditional dates of foundation: Hossô, 660 A.D., afterwards included in the Shin-gon; Ten-dai,* 805 A.D.; Shin-gon, 816 A.D.; Yu-dzû-nen-butsu,* 1127 A.D.; Ziô-dŏ,* 1174 A.D.; Rin-zai, 1191 A.D.; Shin-shiu,* 1224 A.D.; Sô-tô, 1227 A.D.; Nići-ren, 1253 A.D.; Zi-shiu,* 1276 A.D.; Wô-baku, 1624 A.D.; see *Anecd. Oxon.*, vol. i. pt. ii. p. xviii. ff. An enumeration of the existing Japanese sects from the *Buddhist Year Book*, 1908, is given in *Trans. Third Intern. Congress of the Hist. of Religions*, vol. i. p. 132, at the close of a paper read by Mr. Zenkai Omori on the *History of the Zen Shu* in Japan. The Rinzai, Soto, and Wobaku or Obaku are there classified as branches of the Zen Shu, the sect of the Buddha-Heart, the title Zen (= *dhyāna*, meditation) being derived from the practice of the members of the sect, who attach great importance to meditation. The Soto school

Japanese Buddhist Sects

are recognised in Japan, of which the most important and popular, the sect of the 'Pure Land,' was founded in the twelfth century by the monk *Genku* or *Hônen*, and revived after his death by his chief disciple *Shinran* in the year 1224. Both Hônen and Shinran are said to have originally belonged to the *Tendai* sect.

Hônen, the earnest preacher and promulgator of the doctrine of the Shin Shiu, was born in Central Japan in the year 1133, and belonged by birth to the military class. His father was killed in battle, but with his last breath commended his son to the life of a monk, that thus by doing good to his fellow men he might take the best revenge on those who had injured him. At the age of nine accordingly the boy entered a monastery, and after thirty-five years of study and observance of the duties of a monk, was led to accept the doctrine of salvation by simple faith in Amitābha, the compassionate and all-powerful Lord, whom he had learnt to know by reading the Sukhāvatīvyūha.[1] Thenceforth he devoted himself to proclaiming and enforcing this doctrine, which he exemplified in his own life and character, and multitudes came to him for guidance and instruction in the true knowledge. In his later years he is said to have been exiled to a distant province of the Empire. In the end however this tended only to extend his fame and influence. He was recalled, and died at Kyoto at the close of the year 1211 A.D.[2]

Others of the numerous disciples of Hônen is said to be the most numerous, and to be more liberal and practical in their work; the Obaku and Rinzai are alike in maintaining a more conservative position, and in giving more attention to study and doctrine. The Zen Shu is the largest and one of the richest of Japanese sects, with nearly 21,000 temples, the Shin Shiu taking the second place with 19,447. The remaining names are the same, but the Year-book adds a small sect, the 'Zegon Shu,' founded in 736 A.D., which reports only 32 temples.

[1] *supra*, p. 492.

[2] See M. Anesaki in *Trans. Third I. C. H. R.*, i. p. 122 ff.

became the founders of branch sects which still exist, but teach practically the same doctrines. The adherents of the Shin Shiu are the most liberal and open-minded of the Buddhists of Japan. They allow the sacred books to be read in the language of the country, and do not insist on the celibacy of the monks. The other sects diverge more or less widely from the doctrine of the 'Pure Land,' and some of them belong rather to the Hīnayāna school. The Shin Shiu claims to be by far the largest of the individual sects of Japan, numbering as its adherents about a third of the total Buddhist population of the country.[1] In Japan as in China monasteries and images are very numerous, and some of the former are on a highly elaborate scale. Thus in a well-known temple at Kyoto there are 33,333 statues of *Kwan-non*, the goddess of mercy, set up as a thankoffering by a former emperor on his recovery from sickness. Great images also of the Buddha in bronze, called *Daibutsus*, have been erected, two at least of which are over fifty feet high. The most widely known and most frequently visited of these is at Kamakura, near Yokohama, and is impressively placed in the open air at the end of a long avenue. It is hollow, and contains within a small shrine to Kwan-non. The image is said to have been erected in the year 1252, and to have been originally covered over with a wide roof, which was destroyed about two centuries later, and has never been re-built.

[1] Cp. also J. Chamberlain in Murray's *Handbook to Japan*, p. 41 ff.; A. Lloyd in *Trans. Third I. C. H. R.*, i. p. 132 ff.

MYTHOLOGY AND COSMOLOGY

Mythology

With the severe and simple doctrines of a primitive Buddhism it was improbable that the Oriental mind would long remain content; and in this respect the contrast, both in doctrine and ritual, between the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna was most marked. Accordingly at a comparatively early stage there was developed a rich mythology, which centred mainly around the person of the Buddha, the marvels of his life, and his words and deeds in former existences; and which so far made concession to popular beliefs that by bringing them into some kind of relation to the person of the founder, it was able to adopt with slightly modified prerogatives and powers most of the popular deities of Hinduism. The result as far as the Northern School was concerned was that a system, in theory atheistic, became possessed of an elaborate hierarchy of angels and saints, gods and goddesses in all but name, who were made objects of devotion. At the same time also the conception of Nirvāṇa as a practical end in view, capable of attainment here and now, was allowed to fall into the background, and was replaced by the desire to win one or other of the numerous heavens that rise above the earth, and to avoid the lower worlds or hells where all manner of torments awaited the evil-doer. These last were more particularly characteristic of Buddhist teaching in the Northern countries, but were to be found also in Burma and Ceylon and the South, being part of the price which the higher faith had to pay for its tolerance of the lower primitive beliefs of the native peoples amongst whom it found a home.

According to Buddhist cosmology the universe

which is man's dwelling is only one of many, each of which is divided into three regions or worlds, *viz.* *Kāmaloka*, or the world of desire, which is the lowest; *Rūpaloka*, or the world of form; and *Arūpaloka*, or the world of formlessness. Tibetan speculation carried the series yet higher; and above the Arūpaloka placed the world of the five celestial Jinas or *Dhyāni-Buddhas*,[1] crowned by the heaven of *Ādi-Buddha*, who is the first of all or primeval Buddha.[2] The Kāmaloka is sub-divided into the six *Devalokas*, or worlds of the gods, beneath which in descending order are the earth or the world of men; next that of the *Aśuras*, or demons, dwelling below the earth; then the world of animals; of *Pretas* or ghosts, disembodied inhabitants of earth, the victims of hunger and thirst; and lowest of all the various hells, whose inhabitants suffer the extremes of torture in proportion to their several crimes. There are thus six forms of existence, and six only, through which a living being may pass. By laborious accumulation of merit an inhabitant of one of the hells may in the course of ages win his way to a place among the gods; and conversely, an inhabitant of a Devaloka may fall so low as to find himself in hell. There is no cessation or escape save by a knowledge of the truth that the Buddha proclaims, through the destruction of *karma* and deliverance from re-birth.

Cosmology

The six Devalokas in their order upwards are as follows: (1) The abode of the four *Mahārājahs*, the guardians of the four quarters of the universe against the demons: these are on the east

[1] Cp. *infra*, p 580 f.

[2] Waddell, pp. 84 ff., 130 f., 336; *ERE*, vol. i. *s.v.*

Dhritarāshtra, the king of the Gandharvas; on the south *Virūdhaka*, the king of the Kumbhāndas; on the west *Virūpāksha*, king of the Nāgas; on the north *Vaiśravana* or *Kuvera*, king of the Yakshas and god of riches.[1] This lowest heaven is situated on the top of the mythical Mount Meru, 84,000 miles high, the centre and axis of the entire system.[2] (2) The *Trayastrimśa* heaven, where Indra dwells and rules the abode of the 'thirty-three' divinities. To this heaven the Buddha came to preach the law to his mother after her death; and in some of his previous existences he had himself been Indra. (3) The heaven of the *Yāmas*, the subjects of Yama, the king and lord of the dead. (4) The *Tushita* heaven, the home of the Bodhisattvas, where Maitreya now presides.[3] The name signifies 'gratified,' 'pleased,'—the heaven therefore of the contented or satisfied ones. (5) The *Nirmāna-rati* heaven, the abode of the gods who delight in creation. (6) The *Paranirmita-vaśavartin* heaven, of the gods who control the creations of others,[4] where Māra, the great Tempter to evil, has his home.

Devalokas

Above these are the sixteen Rūpalokas, or the

[1] So in Hindu mythology Kubera (Kuvera) is regent of the northern quarter. Usually eight guardian rulers are enumerated for the four cardinal and the four intermediate points respectively, *Manu*, v. 96, *al.*, whose names are not always identically given; sometimes however four only are enumerated, as in Buddhism, *e.g. Rāmāy.*, i. 41. 13 ff.

[2] Cp. Waddell, *ll.cc.*, and the figures, pp. 79, 108, *al.*; Monier-Williams, pp. 206 f., 213 f.; Kern, p. 57 ff.

[3] *infra*, p. 578.

[4] According to Monier-Williams, *s.v.*, 'obedient to the will of those transformed by others.' Similarly he would render *nirmāṇa-rati*, 'delighting in transformation.'

lower Brahmalokas, in which various classes of gods dwell. These are regions of true form, free from *kāma*, or desire; and are divided into four groups, corresponding to the four stages of *dhyāna*, or abstract meditation. He who practises the first kind of *dhyāna* will attain to a place in the lowest group, which consists of three heavens. The second and third *dhyānas* have each also three heavens; while the remaining seven are reserved for those who are proficient in the last stage of dhyāna, the *samādhins*, 'completely absorbed,' or *anāgāmins*, 'not returning.'

Rūpalokas

Highest of all are the four *Arūpalokas*, the abodes of formless spirits, beings without material bodies, who are pure abstractions. Here are usually placed the Dhyāni Buddhas.

Arūpalokas

There are therefore altogether thirty-one abodes of living beings, the lowest of which are the hells. The number of the hells is said to be 136, corresponding to the different grades of offenders. According to a scheme elaborated among the Northern Buddhists there were eight principal hot hells, and as many cold.[1]

Gautama himself appears never to have laid claim to divine honours, or to have instructed his followers to look to him as a personal deliverer. His consistent teaching was that each man must work out his own salvation by observing the rules of conduct and discipline which the Buddha delivered. It was inevitable however that in course of time his person should become

Buddhist Saints: Arhats, Ādi-Buddha

[1] Waddell, p. 90 ff.; see *Abhidhammattha-Saṅgaha*, v. 2 ff., translated in Warren, p. 289 ff.

idealized, and invested with divine attributes. This step was taken especially in connection with the development of Northern Buddhism. And as a superhuman character thus came to be ascribed to the Buddha, images made, and worship and prayers offered, so those of his disciples who had far advanced towards perfection became also objects of a similar reverence and adoration. The steps or gradations, moreover, of the path leading to nirvāṇa were duly marked out, and the highest position was assigned to those who having escaped from the round of re-births either have attained or are destined shortly to attain to Buddhahood. Not all however who have escaped the grip of karma do actually become Buddhas in the world.

In this pursuit of nirvāṇa or deliverance there are four progressive stages, which are then further sub-divided and defined. A Buddhist monk who is living in any one of the first three stages is termed a *S'rāvaka*, a hearer or disciple. In the first stage he is free from passion, and can never be born again in a lower world than that of men; in the second he is subject to a single re-birth in that world; in the third he can only be re-born in a Brahmaloka. In the last or highest stage he will never enter upon a new birth, his karma is entirely destroyed, and he has already while still living attained the final goal, nirvāṇa. The name applied to such men is *Arhat*, 'noble' or 'venerable' one; and all the earlier disciples of the Buddha were believed to have become *Arhats*. In the later history of Buddhism the use of the term was extended, and it was made generally applicable to all the great teachers or saints. *Arhats* were credited with supernatural faculties and powers, and especially with the possession of perfect wisdom.

On a grade above these are the *Pratyekabuddhas*, 'single' or 'separate Buddhas,' who have won salvation for themselves, but do not share the knowledge with others. They differ from true Buddhas, in that they are not absolutely omniscient; neither can they live upon earth at the same time as these.[1] The Buddhas therefore are their superiors in the hierarchy of living beings, and above all, the head and crown of the universe, is the *Ādi-Buddha*.[2]

A list of twenty-four or more Buddhas is given who preceded Gautama.[3] These all during their lifetime preached the Law, and established the true religion. In course of time however men forgot the truth, and fell away into ignorance and sin.

[1] Compare Suzuki, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 277 ff., where a passage from the Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka is quoted defining the difference between the arhat, the pratyekabuddha, and the bodhi sattva. The last title is more especially characteristic of the Mahāyāna type of Buddhism; arhat and pratyekabuddha are terms of the Hīnayāna. According to L. de la Vallée Poussin the real relation in ancient Buddhism between a Buddha and an arhat is that of teacher and disciple, the former being competent to the discovery of the truth by his own unaided efforts, the latter requiring instruction. A Buddha also undertakes to communicate his knowledge to others, which a Partyekabuddha does not; *ERE*, vol. ii. pp. 740a, 741a. The Chinese equivalent for Arhat is *Lohan*, and a special group of eighteen Lohan is recognised, among whom is an incarnation of Maitreya, the Buddha of the future; the others who seem to have been taken over from an earlier group of sixteen ere prominent disciples or preachers in the history of the Buddhist Church. Cp. *ERE*, *s.v.* 'Images and Idols (Buddhist).'

[2] On the Ādi-Buddha see especially the article of L. de la V. Poussin in *ERE*, vol. i. p. 93 ff., and the literature there cited.

[3] *e.g. Jātaka*, i. 43, translated in Warren, p. 32 f.; or for the northern tradition, *Sukhāvatī-vyūha* 3, *SBE*, xlix. pt. ii. p. 6 f.; Kern, p. 63 f.

Decline and Restoration of the True Religion

The same fate Gautama prophesied would overtake the community and religion founded by himself; and he even detailed the precise steps in the degeneration which would be followed. The final act would be the spontaneous gathering together of all the relics of all the saints under the great Bo-Tree, and their consumption by fire, amidst the lamentations of the gods and the neglect of men.[1] The ruin would be hastened in consequence of the admission of women into the Order.[2] After the lapse of 5,000 years, with the disappearance of all knowledge of the truth, a new Buddha named *Maitreya* would appear, and restore the true religion unto men. At present he is dwelling in the Tushita heaven, awaiting the right time of his revelation upon earth. As the future deliverer he receives the worship of all Buddhists. Maitreya is among the most frequently represented figures in Buddhist art, in a triad with the historic Buddha in the centre and Avalokita at the latter's left-hand. The identity of the figures however is not always easy to establish.[3]

Bodhisattvas

A being who is thus destined to become a Buddha is known as a *Bodhisattva*, 'one whose essence is wisdom'; and every Buddha in the earlier period of his existence has been a *Bodhisattva*. Gautama himself was in this state until the hour of his attainment of Buddhahood under the Bo-Tree.

[1] *Anāgata-Vamsa*, or History of Future Events; Warren, p. 481 ff.; *ERE*, *s.v.* Buddha, vol. ii. p. 885.

[2] *C'ullav.*, x. 1. 6.

[3] See A. Grünwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, p. 184 ff.; J. H. Marshall, in *JRAS*, 1908, p. 1108; *ERE*, art. 'Images and Idols (Buddhist).'

Lists of the Bodhisattvas with their names are found in the Buddhist books. This doctrine of the Bodhisattvas, their office and work, is the most remarkable and characteristic feature of the Northern School of Buddhism; and gives to it as a system an entirely different complexion from that of the somewhat stiff and formal philosophy of the South. The same title was assigned to other great saints, to whom were ascribed all the qualities and perfections of a true Bodhisattva, but who were not destined to appear as Buddhas upon earth. Their distinctive attribute was that of mercy or compassion; and they were thus distinguished from the Arhats, who with a less human nature were represented as cold and passionless, untouched by sympathy with human distress. The Bodhisattvas were doubtless in many instances great teachers distinguished for their wisdom and influence, who during their lifetime or after death came to be regarded with a superstitious reverence, and were practically deified.[1]

In Northern Buddhism a triad of these divinities is early found, whose origin and history are altogether obscure. They were known to the Chinese pilgrims, and their cult must have been established in India at least some time before the visits of these monks.[2] On the other hand, neither their names nor their office appear to have been recognised by the Buddhists of Ceylon, and in some of the oldest Northern books also they have no place. Their names are *Avalokiteśvara*, 'the lord who looks down,' *i.e.*

[1] See especially L. de la Vallée Poussin, art. *Bodhisattva* in *ERE*, ii. p. 739 ff.; D. T. Suzuki, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, chaps. xi., xii.; *Trans. of Ninth I. C. H. R.*, i. p. 119 ff.

[2] See Fā-Hian, ch. xvi.; Hiuen-Tsiang, in Beal, i. pp. 60, 127 f., 180, *al. passim*.

upon earth or men, also called *Padma-pāni*, 'lotus-handed'; *Vajra-pāni*, 'thunderbolt-handed'; and *Mañju-śrī*, 'he of glorious splendour.'[1] A variety of the name Avalokiteśvara is Lokeśvara or Lokanātha, 'Lord' or 'Protector of the World'; and in his spiritual form as Amitābha (Amida) or Amitāyus he is the most widely known and popular divinity of Northern Buddhism. As the incarnation of the Dharmakāya[2] he is often described as realising the Buddhist conception of a personal God. To him men turn in the hour of need, the pitiful or compassionate lord, whose aid is more frequently invoked than that of any other member of the Buddhist pantheon. By the Tibetans the Dalai Lāma is regarded as an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara. And in China and Japan his female counterpart has become the popular and universally worshipped 'goddess of mercy,' under the names of Kwan-yin and Kwan-non.[3] *Mañju-śrī* is the god of wisdom or of speech. *Vajra-pāni* is the wielder of the thunderbolt, the god of war, answering to the Hindu Indra. With these two others were later associated, making a total of five Bodhisattvas to correspond to the five Buddhas of the present age, namely Gautama himself with his three predecessors and Maitreya.

A further development peculiar to the Mahāyāna school was the conception of five *Dhyāni-Buddhas*, Buddhas of meditation, that is mystical or spiritual

[1] Monier-Williams, p. 195 ff.; Waddell, p. 354 ff., and figures at pp. 12, 13, 228; *ERE*, vol. ii. *s.v.* Avalokiteśvara.

[2] *supra*, p. 540 f.

[3] Compare the *S'akti* of the Hindus, *supra*, p. 396 f. According to L. de la V. Poussin the change by which the masculine divinity was replaced by a goddess was probably effected in India; see *ERE*, ii. p. 260b.

Buddhas. Their names are Vairoćana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddha. To these correspond five Dhyānibodhisattvas, Bodhisattvas of meditation, and the five human Buddhas, Manushibuddhas.[1] In Tibet they became the five celestial *Jinas*, evolved by meditation from the Ādi-Buddha. In their origin therefore they were probably nothing more than metaphysical abstractions; but in practice their position is amongst the most highly honoured and widely reverenced divinities. They are different from Bodhisattvas, for they will never become Buddhas. And they are provided also with feminine consorts or counterparts. Unlike the Bodhisattvas however no reference is found to them in the records of the early travels of the Chinese monks. Of these Dhyāni-Buddhas the most popular and widely known was *Amitābha* or *Amitāyus*,[2] 'he of unbounded' or 'infinite light'; upon the marvels and delights of whose paradise the Mahāyānist writers expatiate in their sacred books with an unrestrained wealth of imagery and fancy. He is spiritually the father of Avalokiteśvara. And the Panchen Lāma is his living incarnation upon earth.

Dhyāni-Buddhas

Thus practically there came to be five triads, each consisting of a Bodhisattva, a Buddha, and a Dhyāni-Buddha. The only triad however of any real significance and importance, or that has any hold upon the mind and reverence of the people, is that connected with the Buddha of history, *viz.* Avalokiteśvara or Padma-pāni, Gautama Buddha, and Amitābha.

[1] Kern, pp. 64, 96; *ERE*, vol. i. p. 94 f.

[2] Cp. *supra*, p. 492 f.

By the Buddhists both of the North and South festivals and sacred days are observed, some at least of which have been borrowed from the Hindu calendar. Thus in Tibet and elsewhere the coming of the New Year is celebrated with public rejoicings. In Siam and Burma this takes the form of a Water Festival, a period of holiday and licence, when water is freely thrown about the streets and at the passers-by, and boat-racing is indulged in amidst great excitement. Elsewhere the same festival appears to mark the beginning of the rainy season. The close of this season, the season of the monastic retreat, was celebrated by a Feast of Lights, the Hindu Dīvālī (*dīpāvalī*, 'row of lights'). And the anniversaries of the birth and death of Gautama Buddha, and of other Buddhas and holy men, were duly observed. Most of the great temples and monasteries have further their own private or local celebrations, often attended by crowds of worshippers and of more than local repute.

Festivals

Sacred objects also have never been wanting to Buddhist worship from the earliest period. Among the most important and widely known of these is the *ćakra*, or *dharma-ćakra*, the 'wheel of the law,' a symbol intended to denote the endless circling of cause and effect, returning into one another. It is found depicted on early monuments, and was looked upon with reverence if not actually worshipped.[1] The

Sacred Objects

[1] The circle or wheel, as a religious symbol, is known elsewhere than in Buddhism; compare for its occurrence in Egypt, A. Wiedemann in *PSBA*, xxiii. (1901) p. 263 ff., with full references, who prefers to regard the symbolism as connected with purificatory rites. The well-known symbol of the *svastika*, the broken circle, probably originated in a similar

dorje or thunderbolt, the Sanskrit *vajra*, in the hands of Tibetan monks became an efficient instrument for driving away evil spirits.[1] In the same country one of the most prominent objects is the prayer-wheel or cylinder, found in every village and at every temple and shrine and in the hands of the Lāmas of every sect, inscribed with the sacred and auspicious formula of prayer,—*Om maṇi padme hūm*. Literally translated this is, 'Om, the jewel in the lotus, hūm'; and it is not therefore, properly speaking, a prayer at all, but an exclamation. The significance of the phrase has been much discussed, but apparently it refers to the supposed birth of Avalokiteśvara, by whom the prayer was composed, from a lotus-flower.[2] The mere repetition of the words secures unlimited merit, and an easy passage through the various forms of existence. It is probably by far the most frequently uttered formula of prayer in the world. Neither is it necessary actually to pronounce the words. Writing them upon a cylinder, which may then be turned by the wind or by machinery, is equally efficacious, and places to the credit of the Buddhist worshipper a store of merit without the necessity of personal exertion. The same formula

conception, and was significant of ceaseless progression, without beginning or end. The ancient or heretical school of Tibet reversed the arms of the svastika, representing it as turning in the opposite direction to the course of the sun or the hands of a watch. Cp. Waddell, *Lamaism*, p. 389, *Lhasa and its Mysteries*, p. 323.

[1] It is figured for example in Waddell, p. 341, and often elsewhere.

[2] F. W. Thomas, in *JRAS*, 1906, quoting Mill, regards maṇi padme as one word and a vocative, the formula being an invocation of Tārā, the 'feminine counterpart' of Padmapāṇi. Cp. L. A. Waddell, *Buddhism of Tibet*, pp. 139, 148 ff., *Lhasa and its Mysteries*, pp. 29 f., 85.

inscribed on walls, rocks, and flags meets at every turn the eye of the traveller in Mongolia and Tibet.[1] It is worthy of especial notice that *Om*, the most sacred syllable of the Hindus, is thus equally holy to the followers of the Buddha. The Bo-Tree under which Gautama obtained Buddhahood, and other trees such as the mango, are also regarded as invested with peculiar sanctity. And the localities connected with the Buddha's earthly life, as Kapilavastu Gayā or Benares, have been centres of pilgrimage from the earliest times.

Stūpas and Relics

The most sacred objects however are undoubtedly the relics of Buddhist saints; and among these, portions that were believed to have been preserved of the body of Gautama himself, or of articles used by him, naturally took the first place. For their protection and preservation solid structures of brick or stone were erected, in the centre

[1] The formula is generally believed to be of very considerable antiquity. Waddell gives a facsimile 'in Indian characters of about the seventh century.' It has not, so far as I am aware, been met with anywhere in India. Compare Monier-Williams, p. 371 ff.; Waddell, p. 148 ff., with figures of prayer-wheels, pp. 45, 172, 218 *al.* The latter writer quotes a statement from one of the Tibetan chronicles:—'This formula "is the essence of all happiness, prosperity and knowledge, and the great means of deliverance"; for the *Om* closes re-birth amongst the gods, *ma* among the Titans, *ni* as a man, *pad* as a beast, *me* as a Tantalus, and *Hūm* as an inhabitant of hell.' So also C. A. Sherring, *Western Tibet*, p. 251 f., who writes that 'each syllable has a colour appointed to it, which is typical of the phases of life: *om*, the gods, white; *ma*, the Titans, blue; *ni*, man, yellow; *pad*, animals, green; *me*, ghouls, red; *hum*, inhabitants of hell, black.' The same author states that in Central Tibet, but not in the western parts of the country, lines of flags thus coloured were frequently seen with the syllables painted on them, each in its appropriate colour. Cp. Waddell, *Lhasa*, p. 322.

of which the relic was placed within a casket. Buildings of this character, of greater or less dimensions, are found in all Buddhist countries, and in India and Ceylon the ruins of them are numerous. Several of the largest and most important have been excavated, as at Amarāvati and Bhattiprolu in the Kistna District of South India, and more recently at Piprāhwā in the North near to Gautama's birthplace, and at Peshāwar in the Panjāb.[1] Originally merely hemispherical mounds they developed into elaborate buildings which retained the same general form, but were often richly ornamented, provided with railings and a circular walk for the processions of pilgrims, and at the top a gilt canopy. The name applied to them was *stūpa* or *dāgaba*,[2] the latter term denoting at first the casket in which the relic was enshrined, and then extended to the entire building. It is still, as it has always been in Buddhist countries, a work of the greatest merit to raise a *stūpa*, even if no relic can be placed therein. Unfortunately the same merit does not attach to keeping them in repair; once built they are neglected, and allowed to fall into ruin. They are now often erected merely in honour of some saint, or to commemorate some event. In early times they were apparently always designed for the preservation of relics.

A third term applied to these monuments was

[1] See *Archaeological Survey of India*, New Series, vols. vi., xv.; *JRAS*, 1898, p. 573 ff., and the Reports on Archaeological Exploration in India, by J. H. Marshall, *ib.*, 1907 p. 993 ff., 1908 p. 1085 ff., 1909 p. 1053 ff. Cp. also *supra*, p. 449 f.

[2] *Dāgaba* is a shortened form of the Sanskrit *dhātu-garbha*, 'relic-receptacle'; which was again corrupted into 'pagoda.' *Stūpa*, through the Pāli *thūpa*, has become the modern *tope*.

caitya,[1] a 'heap' or 'pile.' As distinguished from *stūpa*, the name *caitya* is said to be originally and properly used only of an erection within a temple or hall, not in the open air. In Tibet the same buildings are termed *ch'ortens*, and are more varied in form, presenting sometimes the appearance almost of stepped pyramids, with domes and capital. The celebrated Tooth-Temple at Kandy in Ceylon holds perhaps the most famous and venerated relic in the Buddhist world.[2]

C'aitya

The *dāgabas* or pagodas of Burma are very numerous, and some of them are of great size. The Shwé-Dagon, the principal pagoda of Rangoon, is higher than St. Paul's cathedral, and a quarter of a mile in circuit. According to general belief there are here preserved hairs from Gautama's head, together with relics also of the three preceding Buddhas; and the temple, with the numerous chapels and shrines surrounding it, is visited by crowds of pilgrims. Many of the dāgabas contain also representations of the Buddha's footprint, to which honour is paid. Still larger in intention is the great unfinished pagoda by the river-side at Mingun, above Mandalay, the foundations of which are said to cover an area of nearly five acres,—'the largest mass of solid brickwork in the world.' The building was commenced by king Bodaw-paya early in the nineteenth century, but the work was abandoned after his death in 1819, and an earthquake

Dāgabas of Burma

[1] Pāli, *cetiya*. In practice the word is employed with the widest possible meaning, including not only sacred buildings, but sacred objects of all kinds. Cp. Kern, p. 91 ff., with references; Grünwedel, p. 20 f.

[2] See a description in Monier-Williams, pp. 453 f., 500 ff.

twenty years later shattered the great mass of brickwork from top to bottom.[1] In Pegu and the lower country great numbers of Buddhist caves have been discovered, containing ancient sculptures and images; and a few brief inscriptions have also been found.

Summary

It is evident therefore that the creed of Buddhism varies in its content and character at least as widely as Christianity, represented by its different churches and sects, or even Hinduism itself. Except in regard to the honour paid to Gautama Buddha there is little in common between the philosophical faith and self-reliance of an adherent of the Hīnāyana and the strong theism and altruistic teaching of the Mahāyāna. The latter in its purest and most spiritual form is essentially more in sympathy with the Christian spirit than its rival; but the Mahāyānism of China, for example, is so distinct in practice and the general terms of belief that it can hardly be described under the same name as the Lāmaism of Tibet. The Buddhism of Japan stands apart again, and has developed along its own lines in harmony with the genius of the people. In each land also to which the teaching of the Buddha was carried by the energetic and self-denying zeal of its missionaries, the ultimate form of the faith and the special impress which it received were determined to a large extent by the strength and character of the native beliefs and usages, together with contributory elements sometimes from more than one foreign source.

[1] V. C. Scott O'Connor, *Mandalay and other Cities of Burma*, 1907, p. 186 ff.; *Gazetteer of Upper Burma*, Rangoon, 1900.

In the issue it often proved, as in Tibet, that the native and popular conceptions prevailed over the imported faith, and controlled almost entirely the nature of the resultant system; so that little remained of Buddhism, as ordinarily understood, but the name. Mahāyānist doctrine itself is manifold; and its divergences from Hīnayāna principles are wide and fundamental.

Relation of the Schools to Primitive Buddhism

Buddhism therefore is in reality not one system but many. And the question might not unjustly be raised, which of the two great schools most faithfully reflects the mind of the Master. The answer usually given, that in the Hīnayāna and in the Pāli tradition must be sought the spirit and teaching of true primitive Buddhism, is probably correct; although even here no one would claim that modifications of doctrine and probably additions, how serious it is impossible to determine, have been made in the course of the centuries. It is only against this latter form of Buddhism, moreover, that the often-repeated accusation lies that it is a system of philosophy rather than a religion. The charge is hardly to be justified even of the Hīnayāna, if its practice be taken into account equally with speculative theory. And it is in no degree or sense true of the Mahāyāna, which has as rightful a claim to the title of a religion as any other faith that has commanded the allegiance of the hearts and lives of men. In the system and doctrine of the Hīnayāna, however, there has certainly been preserved a more exact delineation of the teaching which Gautama himself set forth, and exemplified in his own conduct and life while upon earth.

The orderly development of Buddhist doctrine, as

represented by its earliest known documents and traditions, takes its stand upon the assumed proposition that man has the power, and therefore ought to work out his own salvation by the force of his own determination and will, apart from external or supernatural assistance. In this respect Gautama declared himself unable to render any aid to his disciples. It is the office of a Buddha to proclaim the truth,—truth into which the ordinary man is incapable of penetrating untaught; whether he hear and obey, and by acceptance of the revelation and submission to the doctrine and discipline achieve deliverance from evil, depends upon himself alone. Evil moreover from this Buddhist point of view is not primarily moral or determinative of character, but is summed up in the one word existence and in all that it implies. This deliverance consists in detachment from all the objects of sense, from all lust and craving for continuance of life; and is not to be attained by mere asceticism, but by overcoming the passions, and by resolutely pursuing a noble and virtuous course. It is ignorance that binds to existence, and that lies at the root of all suffering. The Buddha brings light and knowledge. But for the manner in which they profit or fail to profit by the light men are themselves alone responsible, and in the present or a future existence will themselves pay the penalty or enjoy the reward.

Review of Doctrine

Into the deeper metaphysical questions that lie behind the practical needs of everyday life Gautama appears to have consistently refused to enter. The abundant and almost riotous speculation of later Buddhism is rooted elsewhere than in the Founder's teaching. In effect simply even sternly agnostic, he

took the gloomy view of life so universal in Indian thought; and taught not so much the overcoming of its evils and the bearing of its responsibilities, as the evasion of both. If this creed is to be summed up in philosophical terms it is agnostic rather than atheistic, practical and intensely pessimistic.[1] At the same time he disavowed all sympathy with abstract spiritual conceptions, emphasized the practical rather than the theoretical, and refused to admit belief in a spiritual element in man or in the universe. But the taking up of this position appears to have been dictated rather by a dislike, perhaps constitutional, to metaphysical assertions, than by any positive materialistic prepossessions. For himself he disclaimed any honours or rights beyond those of a mere man, who having by his own exertions and merit attained to perfect knowledge has become the benefactor of the human race by preaching the truth and showing to them the way of salvation.

The primitive Buddhist ideal, therefore, is in many respects not unworthy of the high praise that has often been bestowed upon it. Of all non-Christian religions Buddhism probably approaches nearest to Christianity in the presentation and enforcement of a lofty code of morality. It is in the development and the working out of the details of the scheme that inconsistencies and shortcomings arise. Nor is the reason far to seek. Buddhism failed to supply a sufficient motive or encouragement for the pursuit of righteousness, and acknowledged its inability to render assistance to the disciple who has embarked

[1] The most complete discussion of the subject is in L. de la Vallée Poussin's art., to which reference has already been made, *ERE*, i. p. 220. It cannot be denied, still less disproved, that the agnostic tendency may be a later development, which has been mistakenly attributed to Gautama himself.

in the prescribed course. That Gautama preached a selfish religion has often been made a charge against Buddhism. And of that charge neither the Founder nor those who later elaborated and extended his teaching can stand acquitted. The good works which a Buddhist of the Hīnayāna school at least does are avowedly for his own sake alone, for the purpose of the accumulation of a store of merit. The claims of self-interest are presented to him at every turn in his sacred books and in the teachings of his Church. But there is nothing higher or nobler, nothing to lift him above the ignominy of a self-centred life, or to inspire him with lofty ideals of disinterested service for his fellow men. This last principle indeed the Mahāyāna adopts, and exemplifies on the broadest possible scale in its doctrine of the Bodhisattvas. The doctrine however, whatever its real source, is not a part of primitive Buddhist teaching, but an accretion from without which has profoundly modified the character of the system into which it was introduced.[1]

Missionary Character of Early Buddhism

Buddhism also was the first missionary religion, and won all its early triumphs through preaching. The zeal and devotion of the Buddhist monks who carried their Master's teaching into other lands, or who came to India to perfect their own knowledge of the Law which he had proclaimed, have rarely been excelled. Its missionary success was largely due to its doctrine of the absolute equality of all men, with equal opportunities and with equal prospects. In this respect it was like Muhammadanism. But the methods of the Buddhist preachers were always

[1] *supra*, pp. 541, 544 f.

peaceable. Buddhism, to its abiding honour, is the only great religion which has never persecuted. It has won its way by persuasion, but never by the sword; nor has it ever used its position or power to compel conformity to its precepts. The missionary glories of Buddhism however lie in the distant past. No modern propaganda of any importance is carried on. Among the Buddhists of Japan and Ceylon a revived interest has become apparent of recent years in their own sacred books, and in the defence of their faith. But the interest is largely literary, suggested and inspired by European example. Nor does it appear likely to spread, or to exercise a more than transient or local influence upon the future of a religion which, whatever its defects, has unquestionably done much to benefit the human race, and to introduce and perpetuate a higher standard of conduct and of life.

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CHAPTER VI

JAINISM

THE precise relationship between Jainism and the religious system of the Buddha is undetermined. The materials as yet available have opened the way to certain broad and general conclusions; but beyond these it is not possible to go, to trace in detail the relation of the one to the other, or to assert on the contrary their absolute independence. The external likeness of the two systems is obvious at a glance; their real dissimilarity only reveals itself on closer inspection. The earlier view which regarded Jainism as a mere offshoot of Buddhism, and identified its reputed founder with Gautama Buddha, has ceased with clearer knowledge to be tenable. But on the other hand the resemblances, whether in early traditions, in doctrine, or in organisation, are too numerous to be explicable by mere accident, or by the play of similar forces working to similar results. The founder or reformer of Jainism can no longer be claimed as a mere reflex or double of the Buddha. The history of his life with all its coincidences and similarities is too distinct to admit of being any further confused with Buddhist narratives. Whether or how far the portrait, dim enough at the best, is true to life may be fairly debated. It does not however represent the same original as is depicted in the traditions of the rival and infinitely more important and successful faith.

Relation to Buddhism

Moreover, if reliance may be placed upon the statements of the Buddhist books, they themselves bear testimony to the reality and independent position of the teacher whom Jaina authorities name as the founder of their religious creed. Among the opponents of the Buddha, whose views are represented as unsound and heretical, was one Jñātiputra, in Pāli Nātaputta, of Vaiśālī, the head of the sect of the Nirgranthas (Niganthas) or naked ascetics.[1] Jñātiputra, 'the son of Jñāti,' has been shown to be the same as *Mahāvīra*, the founder of Jainism[2]; and *Nirgrantha*, 'free from bonds' or 'impediments,' is the usual term in their sacred books for a Jaina monk. Nātaputta is further said to have died shortly before Gautama himself. Buddhist authorities do not however represent the Niganṭhas as a newly arisen sect. It has therefore been suggested with some probability that Nātaputta should be looked upon rather as a reformer of existing views and practices than as the originator of a new school of thought. If this conclusion were correct, it would determine the question of precedence in favour of Jainism. In either case Mahāvīra must be regarded as an older contemporary of the Buddha.

Testimony of the Buddhist Books

Light therefore is thus thrown in some degree upon the origins of Jaina history from Buddhist

[1] *Mahāvagga*, vi. 31. 2; *C'ullavagga*, v. 8. 1; *Sutta-Nipāta*, iii. 6. The names therefore are found in the most ancient Pāli tradition; and the doctrines there ascribed to Jñātiputra are those which were later recognised as most characteristic of Jaina belief and practice. Cp. Barth, p. 150, note 3; J. G. Bühler, *Indian Sect of the Jainas*, p. 28 ff.

[2] See note by Rhys Davids in *SBE*, vol. xvii. p. 109; Hopkins, p. 283 and note; J. G. Bühler, *l.c.*

sources. But the reverse is also true that occasionally the representations of the Buddhist books can be explained by facts noticed or preserved in Jaina records. For example, in the Buddhist accounts the heretical tendency of the men of Vaiśālī, and their indifference if not hostility to the Buddha, is very pronounced, but no explanation of their attitude is forthcoming. The missing link is supplied, and at the same time the truth of the Buddhist representation is confirmed by the Jaina narrative, in which this city appears as a centre and stronghold of the Jaina faith.

Relations to Brāhmanism

The attitude also of the two religions towards the Brāhmanism by which they were surrounded appears to have been entirely different. In the Buddhist books the 'true Brāhman' is never mentioned but with respect.[1] Buddhism, though it preached different doctrines, ever lived in tolerance and amity with its great rival and predecessor; and there is not a particle of evidence to show that the supposed hostility between the two faiths was other than imaginary, or that persecution ever took place on either side. With Jainism the case was otherwise. The legend of the transfer of the embryo of Mahāvīra from the womb of a Brāhman to that of a Kshatriya woman, because

[1] See, for example, the Soṇadaṇḍa Suttanta of the Dīgha Nikāya on the Characteristics of the True Brāhman, translated in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, p. 137, where the Brāhman Soṇadaṇḍa declares the five necessary qualifications of a Brāhman to be noble birth, a perfect knowledge of the Three Vedas, physical beauty, wisdom, and virtue; but is induced by a process of Socratic questioning to acknowledge that the first three are really indifferent, leaving as the only acceptable criteria and test of the claim to the title the last two qualities of virtue and wisdom. Cp. *Dhammapada*, ch. xxvi.; *supra*, p. 484.

it was impossible for so great a prophet to be born 'in low families, mean families, degraded families, poor families, indigent families, beggars' families, or brahmanical families,'[1] is an indication of ill-feeling or contempt slight but significant. The dislike appears also to have been fully reciprocated, in spite of the fact that in modern times at least Jaina practice approaches much more nearly to the Hindu model than Buddhism can ever have done.[2] It is possible that to the fact that it was a recognised opponent of established Brāhmanism the Jaina religion owed its immunity, when Buddhism died or was trampled out in India. More probably its comparative insignificance saved it. In modern India Jainism, at least in theory, holds a middle place between agnostic and materialistic Buddhism on the one hand, and on the other the idealism of the Brāhmans. In practice moreover the early jealousy or rivalry towards the prevailing faith has completely died out; and Jainas will in many instances, whether through indifference or of set purpose, allow themselves to be described as Hindus.

At the Indian census of 1911 the number of Jainas enumerated was slightly under a million and a quarter, representing a decrease during the preceding decade of nearly a hundred thousand.[3] The decrease, it is pointed out, is probably more apparent than real, since many Jainas seem to have been entered in the census returns as Hindus. A decrease was also

[1] *Kalpa Sūtra*, 17; *SBE*, xxii. p. 225.

[2] Compare the Rājputāna proverbs quoted from the Bombay Census Report in *Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxv. (1896) p. 147:—'It is better to jump into a well than to pass a Jain ascetic on the road.' 'Through the shadow of a Jain temple a Hindu may not run even to escape a tiger.'

[3] Cp. *Census of India Report*, Calcutta, 1903, p. 381 f.; and J. A. Baines in *General Report of the Census of India*, 1891, pp. 162, 172.

reported during the years 1891–1901, but previous to that date their numbers appear to have been on the increase. It is possible that the change is not due to a real decadence of the Jaina faith, the zeal and attachment of whose followers show no sign of failing, but for the most part at least to more accurate enumeration. The adherents of Jainism are found mainly in the west and north, about two-fifths of the entire number having their home in the Bombay Presidency with its Native States. The greater part of them belong to the merchant or trading class, but a few are returned as cultivators. Rather more than a fourth of the whole are in Rājputāna and Ajmīr, and the remainder in Central India and the United Provinces, a few only being met with in other parts of India. In Bengal and on the east coast generally, apart from the capital cities they hardly exist. In the southern districts however they must at one time have been more numerous, since Tamil and Karanese literature appear to show considerable traces of Jaina influence.[1] The few that remain are generally in a humble position in life, employed in agriculture, and do not generally occupy so high a social position as their co-religionists of the Bombay Presidency and the North.

Chandragupta and the Jains

According to a tradition well-known in the south of India Chandragupta, the grandfather of the great Buddhist emperor Aśoka, was a Jaina by religion, and some have claimed his grandson for the same faith before his conversion to Buddhism. Chandragupta is said to have been a disciple of Bhadrabāhu, and under his influence to have abandoned his kingdom in the north, and migrated southwards with his teacher to Mysore, where at S′ravaṇa-Belgola he died in the year 297 B.C., according to the S′vetāmbara tradition, in a cave on the hill Chandragiri. The hill derived its name in fact from Chandragupta, who was one of the chief disciples of Bhadrabāhu, and alone was in

[1] See R. Caldwell, *Dravidian Grammar*², 1875, Introd., pp. 86, 124, 129.

attendance on the latter at the time of his death, surviving him for a period of twelve years, which were spent in retirement and the practice of austerities on the same hill. There also Chandragupta himself died, and there his name and the later events of his life are commemorated in one of the more ancient temples on the site. The tradition is found in early literature of the tenth century of our era, and in view of the tenacity of Eastern memory and tradition may not impossibly be correct.[1]

The Jinas

The term *Jaina* or *Jain* signifies a follower of the *Jina*, the 'victorious' or 'conquering' one. *Jina* is the formal title of the teacher or founder of the *Jaina* religion, as the Buddha of that of the Buddhist. But both terms are used interchangeably as epithets, together with many others, of the head of the rival sect.[2] According to the Jaina tradition there have been twenty-four *Jinas*, who made their appearance in India at successive intervals of decreasing length; each in turn was born of a noble family, lived his appointed term upon earth, which became

[1] See B. L. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, London, 1909, pp. 3 ff., 6–10, and references. On the date of Bhadrabāhu, H. Jacobi in *SBE*, vol. xxii. p. xliii.; cp. *supra*, p. 437.

[2] *Tathāgata* and *Arhat* also are titles common to the two faiths (*supra*, pp. 440, 576). Besides the terms Jina and Buddha mentioned above the Jaina books use further the names *Siddha*, 'perfect,' *Kevalin*, 'sole' or 'absolute,' and especially *Tīrthakara*, 'maker of the ford,' *i.e.* through the stream of existence, guiding those who follow him beyond the reach of the *saṁsāra*. The last epithet, as applied to the founder of the faith, is peculiar to Jainism. It recalls the Latin title of 'pontifex'; and the latter not improbably derives its origin from a similar metaphor or association of ideas. Most if not all of the other names are taken over by both sects from earlier Brāhman usage.

shorter at each successive revelation, and revived the doctrine or truth taught by his predecessor, which had been forgotten in the course of time. Details of their lives are given in the *Kalpa Sūtra* ascribed to Bhadrabāhu, who is said to have lived at the close of the fourth century B.C. In its present form the work is many centuries later, and contains large additions and amplifications. The only biography that is there given with any degree of completeness is that of Mahāvīra, the last of the Jinas and founder of the present religion; and of even this narrative two-thirds are taken up with the miraculous circumstances attending his birth. The remaining lives are very brief, and bear a strong resemblance to one another; increasing in the marvellousness of their details, until *Rishabha*, the first Jina, is reached, who taught the seventy-two sciences and the hundred arts, and lived for more than eight millions of years. It is thought that besides Mahāvīra there may have been preserved in *Pārśva*, the Jina immediately preceding, some facts and tradition of a real historical personage. He is said to have been born only two hundred and fifty years before his successor.[1]

Life of Mahāvīra

Mahāvīra, the founder or perhaps merely the reformer or restorer of the Jaina faith, was the son of a Kshatriya chieftain Siddhārtha, belonging to the Kāśyapa clan, ruler of Kundagrāma in Videha. Kundagrāma has been identified with Kotigāma of the Buddhist books,[2] and was therefore situated not far from Vaiśālī. His mother Triśalā was

[1] *SBE*, vol. xxii. p. 217 ff.; the names of the twenty-four are given for example by Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, p. 129 f., note 2; J. G. Bühler, *Indian Sect of the Jainas*, p. 66 ff.

[2] *Mahāv.*, vi. 29 f.; *Mahāparin. S.*, ii. 1–5.

sister to the king of Vaiśālī, and he is himself called Vaiśālika, an evident proof of the close connection of his family with this place. Through his mother Mahāvīra was also related to Bimbisāra, of the royal house of Magadha. The usual portents heralded and accompanied his birth. It is noticeable that in the 'fourteen illustrious great dreams' which appeared to his mother was included that of a white elephant, as to the mother of Gautama. A ten-days' festival was held to celebrate the birth of the child, and the name was given to him by his parents of *Vardhamāna*, 'increaser' of wealth. He was also called *S'ramana*, or 'ascetic,' and *Mahāvīra*, the 'great hero,' because of his patience and endurance. This last name was bestowed upon him by the gods.

Few details of his life are given. When he was thirty years old his parents died, and in fulfilment of an earlier promise, and with the assent of his elder brother, he retired from the world, and like Gautama, 'perceiving . . . that the time for his Renunciation had come,' he abandoned his position and wealth, and under an Aśoka tree stripped himself of his ornaments, and after a two and a half days' solitary fast 'entered the state of houselessness.'[1] For thirteen months he continued to wear clothes, but afterwards lived as a naked ascetic, 'neglecting his body.' In the thirteenth year after again fasting for two and a half days he attained supreme wisdom, became a *Kevalin*, or Arhat, possessed of perfect knowledge; and thenceforth devoted himself to teaching, itinerating far and wide, and succeeded

[1] It is noticeable that all the Jinas, so far as is related, carry out the act of renunciation under the same species of tree, the Aśoka. Each Buddha, on the other hand, has a special tree of a different species, under which he attains Buddhahood, *supra* p. 443 f.

in attaching to himself many disciples. At his death there are said to have been 1,400 S'ramanas, *i.e.* Jaina monks or ascetics, 36,000 nuns, 159,000 lay-votaries, 318,000 female lay-votaries, and numbers of sages whose particular accomplishments are duly chronicled. In this work of teaching and preaching he spent thirty years, and died at Pāpā[1] at the age of seventy-two; or, as the writer of the *Sūtra* phrases it, 'became a Siddha, a Buddha, a Mukta, a maker of the end (to all misery), finally liberated, freed from all pains.' The date of his death is given as 527 B.C. He is recorded to have had eleven *Ganadharas* or chief disciples, of whom only one survived him. These became the leaders or founders of nine distinct schools or *Ganas*.[2] In the Buddhist tradition also he is represented as having died before Gautama.

Jaina Sects

The followers of Mahāvīra bore the name of *Nirgranthas* (*Nigganthas*), 'freed from bonds,' ascetics. The title is found in one of the inscriptions of Aśoka, and is therefore of early date. The names of many sub-divisions also, or sub-sects, are chronicled, with the time and occasion of their rise. Most of these however are now extinct. At the present day the Jaina monks are divided into two principal orders, the *S'vetāmbaras*, or 'white-robed,' and the *Digambaras*, 'sky-clad,' or naked. The former wear the garments of a monk, and are found chiefly in the north and west of India. The Jainas of the south are generally *Digambaras*, and with more or less strictness regularly go about unclothed, and make a virtue of dirt and uncleanliness. Their images

[1] Or Pāwā, identified by Cunningham with the modern Padrauna; J. G. Bühler, *l.c.*, p. 27; *IGI*[3], *s.v.*

[2] See the names in Jacobi, *SBE*, vol. xxii. pp. xvi., 286 ff.

also are represented in the same condition, whereas those of the *S'vetāmbaras* are robed in white. As an organised sect the *Digambaras* are said to have arisen in the third century before Christ, being known originally as Trairāsikas ; when the title Digambara first came into use is uncertain. The *S'vetāmbaras* represent the main body, who abandoned the practice of nudity about two centuries after the time of Mahāvīra ; and it was by them that the sacred books of the Jaina Canon were collected and preserved.[1] A sub-sect of the S'vetāmbaras are the *Dhundias*, but the latter are comparatively few in number. They reject the worship of images, but instead pay extreme reverence to the guru, and are most exact and punctilious in avoiding all injury to life (*ahiṁsā*).

> In the Indian census of 1901 many Jainas made no statement as to their sect, and many, it is believed, concealed their real faith, and professed themselves Hindus. According to the returns available, the S'vetāmbaras were most numerous in the Bombay Presidency and in Baroda. In the latter State they formed seventy-five per cent. of the whole Jaina community, about one-fifth part being Digambaras, and the remainder Dhundias or unclassed. In Rājputāna less than a half were returned as S'vetāmbaras. The Digambaras were found to predominate in Central India, the numbers being nearly one-half Digambaras, about thirty per cent. S'vetāmbaras, five per cent. Dhundia, and the others undifferentiated as regards sect.[2]

The practice of extreme asceticism among the Jaina sects originated in the example and usage of the founder himself, and may be traced back to the influence and teaching of earlier Brāhmanism. It would be correct therefore to claim that in spirit and probably in actual habit primitive

[1] *infra*, p. 604 ff.

[2] *Census of India, General Report*, Calcutta, 1903, p. 367 ff.

Jainism was of the Digambara stamp rather than S'vetāmbara, although the sects were not differentiated, or the names adopted until a later period. Historically also it is probable that rivalry between the two parties existed from an early date, and Dr. Hoernle argues that the Digambaras are in reality the representatives of the ancient Ājīvikas, whose leader or founder, Gosāla, was a contemporary of Gautama and Mahāvīra, and between whom and Mahāvīra there existed a strong feeling of hostility, which was perpetuated and intensified in their adherents. The victory appears to have remained with Mahāvīra, who charged his rival with insincerity and faithlessness to his monastic vows.[1] The differences between the two sects were concerned further with the canon of the sacred writings, and the position adopted towards the admission of women into the monastic order. This last the S'vetāmbaras permit; but there are no nuns among the Digambaras, and according to their creed women are incapable of attaining Nirvāṇa.

Sacred Books

In character the Jaina sacred books bear a strong resemblance to those of the Buddhists. The same subjects are discussed, if with considerably less ability and interest, yet in much the same way. The tradition of the S'vetāmbaras places the earliest formal collection of writings in the time of Bhadrabāhu, in the latter half of the fourth century B.C., when the monks of Pātaliputra gathered together and arranged the twelve *Aṅgas*, 'sections' or 'departments' of scripture. The *Aṅgas* however, according to the same tradition which the Digambaras also accept, were preceded by fourteen other

[1] See art. *Ājīvikas* by Dr. Hoernle in *ERE*, vol. i.; H. Jacobi, *SBE*, vol. xxii. p. xvi.; J. G. Bühler, *l.c.*, pp. 1 ff., 39, 44 f.

and older works, known as *Pūrvas*; of which four had been lost during or before the patriarchate of Bhadrabāhu. The death of the latter is placed by the S'vetāmbaras in the year 297 B.C., but by the Digambaras eight years earlier.[1] He is credited not only with the compilation, but also with the authorship of parts of the literature. The *Pūrvas*, either in whole or in substance, were inserted in the 12th *Aṅga*, called the *Drishtivāda*, which subsequently disappeared; and our only knowledge of them is derived from a brief table of contents found in the 4th *Aṅga*. Another tradition ascribes the composition of the *Pūrvas* to Mahāvīra himself, the *Aṅgas* being the work of the Ganadharas. If these traditions could be accepted, they would throw back the origin of the Jaina literature to a very early date. They are however entirely unsupported. And the little that may be inferred from style and contents would point to a similar and in all probability contemporary origin with the older Pāli literature of the Buddhists. The language also of the books, a Prākrit dialect, is said by Jacobi to approximate in character to the Pāli.[2]

The final revision of the Canon, or *Siddhānta*, is said to have taken place at the Council of Valabhī[3]

[1] *SBE*, xxii. p. xliii.

[2] Cp. R. Pischel, *Grammatik der Prakrit-Sprache*, Strassburg, 1900, p. 16 f.

[3] An ancient capital city in Kāthiāwār, the centre and home of a powerful Hindu dynasty from about 495 A.D. until the second half of the eighth century. See Cunningham, *Anc. Geography*, pp. 316 ff., 323, who identifies the site with the extensive ruins of Vamilapura, 18 miles west-north-west of Bhaunagar. Hiuen-Tsiang visited the town, and found a flourishing Buddhism with very many sectaries of different sorts; Beal, vol. ii. p. 266 ff. Cp. *SBE*, xxii. pp. xxxvii., 270; V. A. Smith, *EHI*, p. 272.

in the year 454 A.D. under the direction of Devarddhi, who in order to preserve the sacred texts had them committed to writing. The work of Devarddhi was therefore conservative, although he is also said to have enlarged the Canon by the incorporation of new treatises. According to other authorities, the Jainas were in possession of written books at least three centuries earlier. The Canon as a whole is accepted only by the S'vetāmbaras. The Digambaras reject the Aṅgas, and appear to have no fixed or definite collection of their own of sacred scriptures.[1]

Doctrines

Like the Buddhists the Jainas expounded a doctrine of Nirvāṇa, but in their sacred books and in their teaching an essentially different idea is conveyed by the term, based upon a different conception of the living being and its composition. The theory of the skandhas, with its materialistic presuppositions,

[1] The complete Canon, which is in reality only that of the S'vetāmbaras of the north, comprises fifty works, *viz.*—5 *Kalpasūtras*, and the 45 *Āgamas*, manuals of doctrine, or collections of sacred precepts. The latter are divided into :—11 *Aṅgas* ; 12 *Upāṅgas*, supports or supplements to the *Aṅgas* ; 4 *Mūlasūtras*, or fundamental sūtras ; 10 *Prakīrnakas*, or miscellaneous pieces ; and 8 *C'hedas*, or sections. See Barth, *Religions of India*, p. 147 note ; a slightly different arrangement in Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, p. xxxvi. note 1. Cp. Pischel *op. cit.*, p. 18 ff. Prof. Hermann Jacobi has translated in *SBE*, vols. xxii. and xlv., first the *Ácārāṅga Sūtra*, a manual of conduct, the first of the 11 Aṅgas, and the *Kalpa Sūtra*, consisting of five Lives of the Jinas ; and second, the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*, and the *Sūtrakritāṅga Sūtra*. The title *Kalpa Sūtra* seems to be derived from the use of the word *kalpa* to denote the heaven or abode of the gods. The Digambara monks possess sacred writings of their own, but little is known about them. In his recent archaeological journey across India to Nepāl, Mr. C. Bendall succeeded in obtaining at Jaipur some valuable Digambara MSS.

is entirely unknown to Jaina philosophy. But on the contrary they maintain a kind of dualism of soul and matter, which is most closely akin to the Sāṅkhya doctrine of the Brāhmans. All existing beings are composed of two parts, *jīva* and *ajīva*, or soul and not-soul, which are the two supreme and ultimate realities of the universe, and are both eternal. The entanglement of the soul in matter, its enforced union with not-soul, is the source of all misery and the present distress. *Nirvāṇa* consists in the deliverance of the soul from this union, its release from bondage to things material, and entrance thereby into a state of unending felicity. Until this release is effected the soul passes from one body to another, through a succession of re-births, the possibilities of which are not limited as with the Buddhists to six orders of living beings only, but extend indefinitely downwards. Thus not only do animals and plants possess souls, but also the material elements and inanimate objects of all kinds. The Jaina re-birth therefore is a true transmigration. And the only contact with Buddhist teaching appears in the doctrine of 'released' souls, that is souls which are still bound to matter by the one sense of touch, but which will never pass into another existence.

The way to attain *nirvāṇa* is revealed and taught by the *Jina* or *Tīrthakara*, who like the Buddha restores to men the knowledge of the truth, forgotten in the long lapse of time. Twenty-four *Jinas* have already appeared, of whom Mahāvīra was the last, the number corresponding to the twenty-four Buddhas of the present age. Jainism however recognises only two ages or eras, the *utsarpiṇī* or ascending, and the *avasarpiṇī* or descending, each of which is

Nirvāṇa

of immense length. Each is sub-divided into six stages, and the world is now in the last stage but one of the 'descending' era, which is an evil age. Nothing seems to be recorded or prophesied of future *Jinas*. The path of liberation or means of release is by the *triratna*, the three gems, *viz.* right faith or intuition, right knowledge, right conduct. Right faith is explained to be absolute unquestioning faith in the teaching of the *Jina*; and right knowledge is a perfect understanding of the real nature of the soul. Knowledge itself again is of five kinds:—*mati*, simple apprehension; *śruta*, clear perception based on mati; *avadhi*, a knowledge of special objects, the fruit of right intuition; *manas-paryāya*, insight into the mind or thoughts of another; *kevala*, 'pure' or perfect knowledge, that is omniscience. An *Arhat* is defined as one who has reached this state of perfect knowledge, and in whom by the help of the three jewels all obstacles to knowledge have been removed. It is therefore logically concluded that no being is omniscient from eternity. Right conduct finally is the conduct of one who acts with right faith and knowledge. This is also fivefold, corresponding to the five vows of the Jaina monk.[1]

Thus to seek after and attain to perfect knowledge was possible only to the monk, who had renounced the world. Jainism recognised the position of the laity, and provided for them services, and a lower status and obligation which made less demands upon duty and self-denial. They were however incapable by their circumstances of an enlightenment and progress, which should advance to perfection. To the saints who had reached the goal and become

[1] J. G. Bühler, *Indian Sect of the Jainas*, p. 5 ff.; H. Jacobi, *SBE*, vol. xxii. p. xxxiii. ff.; *infra*, p. 610 ff.

arhats worship was offered; and of these especially to Pārśvanātha, the immediate predecessor of Mahāvīra, whose image is to be found in many Jaina temples.

This teaching or revelation of the Jina is otherwise expressed as the revelation of the *tattvas*, essences or first principles. Of these the two highest are *jīva* and *ajīva*, which contain in themselves the mystery of being. Others affirm that there are five *tattvas*: *jīva*, or soul; *ākāśa*, ether; *dharma*, law; *adharma*, not-law; *pudgala*, form. Others again give seven, or even nine *tattvas*.

A further condition which must be fulfilled by the wise man who would achieve his own deliverance is the observance of ascetic rules and modes of life. Herein lay a deep and wide cleavage between the two faiths of the Buddha and the Jina. Gautama, having in his own person made trial of austerity and physical self-discipline, and having found them wanting, discouraged these practices in his disciples.[1] Mahāvīra set the example of living in the habit of extreme asceticism, with prolonged fasting. Such a life is characterised in the books as of great merit, and minute regulations are laid down for daily observance, whether in food drink and clothing, or in personal habits. The Jaina monk, who aspires to release from the body, after having passed through a series of re-births, must live for at least twelve years a stern and harsh ascetic life, the number twelve being prescribed in imitation of the founder, who spent twelve years as a mendicant monk before his attainment of perfect knowledge.

Asceticism

[1] Cp. *supra*, p. 443. The Buddhist and Jaina views, both of these in connection with the earlier Brāhman beliefs, are discussed by Rhys Davids in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, pt. 1 p. 209 ff.

Monastic Order

On the whole however the monastic institution was more loosely organised among the Jainas than among the Buddhists, and greater freedom and personal independence appear always to have been allowed. No injunctions were given with regard to a common dwelling-place, and in this respect Jaina practice conformed to the Brāhmanical rather than to the Buddhist model. By the Digambaras the right of admission into the order was denied to women. The monks were divided into two classes, *yatis*, devotees or ascetics, and *śrāvakas*, hearers or disciples. Upon both practically the same discipline and obedience were enjoined. The five principal vows or 'renunciations' which they were called upon to observe were as follows:—Abstinence from destroying life, from falsehood, from taking that which is not given, from impurity and self-indulgence, and from 'attachments' to worldly things.[1] These are sub-divided each into five clauses, which define and particularise; and further minute directions are given throughout the sacred books for daily life and conduct. The precept of *ahiṁsā* especially, that of doing no harm to any living being, is more scrupulously observed by the Jainas than by any other sect.

Under this obligation they abstain entirely from wine, from meat and fruit, and drink no water except such as has been already used by others in cooking; if in this last case injury is accidentally caused to any living thing the guilt does not rest upon the monk, but upon those who originally drew the water or first utilised it for their own purposes. For the same reason the Jaina monk does not bathe,

[1] *Ácárāṅga Sūtra*, ii. 15; *SBE*, xxii. p. 202 ff.; Bühler, *Indian Sect of the Jainas*, p. 12 ff. The technical Sanskrit terms are *ahiṁsā*, *sūnrita*, *asteya*, *brahmácárya*, *aparigraha*.

lest he should inadvertently destroy life. In the rainy season they occupy the rest-houses or *dharmsalas*, built and maintained for them by pious laymen. During the remaining two-thirds of the year they itinerate from place to place, living on alms, or congregate at the great Jaina festivals, as at the early spring commemoration at S'ravana-Belgola in the Mysore State. The more rigorous and conscientious fast entirely during the day-time, making a sparing meal only after sunset; nor are they allowed to move about otherwise than on foot, to kindle a fire, or to sleep on an ordinary bed. The nuns practise a similarly ascetic mode of life, wandering about the country in companies; but have their own nunneries. It is remarkable however that this abstinence from taking life does not apply to their own. Under certain circumstances, when the twelve necessary years of asceticism have been passed, religious suicide is not only innocent but an act of merit or even a duty; and in former times is said to have been of frequent occurrence.[1]

There were also three vows of obedience incumbent upon all,—to the *Jina*, the *dharma* or law, and the *guru*, the living representative or successor of the Jina. The last especially is by many of the Jainas carried to an extreme length. They practically deify their *gurus*, and render to them divine homage. Many of them also recognise Hindu deities.

Comparison of the five Jaina vows with those of the Buddhist[2] will at once show that the first four are the same although given in a different order. That neither sect however has borrowed

[1] *Ácárāṅga Sūtra*, i. 7. 4–8.

[2] *supra*, p. 554.

directly from the other is rendered probable by the fact that the ancient Hindu law-books also prescribe five chief vows for the Brāhman ascetic, the first four of which are identical with the Buddhist or Jaina precepts. The fifth Brāhman vow is a pledge of generosity, upon which the Hindu commentator notes that although an ascetic has no property and so is apparently precluded from being liberal, still he possesses books which he may give away. It was perhaps the inappropriateness of this injunction which led Buddhist and Jaina teachers to substitute another. In both instances the dependence of the later orders is upon the earlier, not upon one another.[1]

The Jaina monks were also known as *syādvādins*, a title perhaps given to them in contempt by their Brāhman opponents; literally 'those who say "it may be"'; from the position of uncertainty or agnosticism which they adopted with regard to the metaphysical questions of the origin and nature of being. The position however of practical atheism professed by many of the monks is said not to be shared by the Jaina laity, whose views are rather deistic, disavowing any Divine interference in the affairs of the world, or the possibility of Divine help in human endeavours to obtain salvation.[2]

[1] See a detailed discussion of the relation of the vows of the three orders by H. Jacobi in *SBE*, vol. xxii. p. xxii. ff. The Brāhman vows are given from Baudyāyana in *SBE.*, vol. xiv. p. 279, as follows:—'Abstention from injuring living beings, truthfulness, abstention from appropriating the property of others, continence, liberality.' The Sanskrit terms are *ahiṁsā, satya, asteya, brahmāćārya, tyāga.* Cp. Gautama iii. 11 ff.; *SBE*, vol. ii². p. 193 f.; *ERE*, art. Asceticism (Hindu), vol. ii. p. 89 f.

[2] Cp. Barth, *Religions of India*², p. 148; *Sarva-darś.*, p. 59 ff.

The equipment of the Jaina monk was in some respects slightly more elaborate than that of the Buddhist. A single plain garment or robe is prescribed for a monk, four for a nun.[1] The Digambaras dispense with clothes altogether; thus presenting a great contrast to the members of the Buddhist order, who are at all times decently clad. In no case may he accept as a gift robes specially made or prepared for him, but if those offered are old or dirty they should be gratefully received. In addition to his robe or robes the monk carries a single alms-bowl, which must not be of expensive materials, a broom with which to sweep the ground before him lest he tread unawares upon any living creature, and a veil over the mouth to prevent the unconscious swallowing of insect life. The observance of the four months of Vassa, which is shared by the Jaina monks with the Buddhists, has been supposed to be adopted from Brāhmanism.[2]

Dress and Equipment

In addition to the practice of regular fasts the adherents of Jainism make frequent pilgrimages to the sacred shrines of their faith. The chief place of resort for the pilgrims is Pārasnāth Hill, in the

[1] J. C. Oman describes a Jaina monk of position and authority, with whom he had an interview, as wearing two white cotton sheets around his shoulders and loins respectively. He informed Mr. Oman that in the cold season a small blanket was or might be added. See *Mystics Ascetics and Saints of India*, p. 144 ff.

[2] 'An ascetic must not change his residence during the rainy season.' Gaut. iii. 13; *SBE*, ii². p. 193; cp. Baudhy. ii. 6. 11. 20. There are however no certain traces of an actual observance of Vassa by Brāhman ascetics. Probably the mere physical difficulty of journeying in the rainy season contributed largely to give rise to the practice. See Jolly, *Recht u. Sitte*, p. 151; Max Müller, *Six Systems*, p. 310; *ERE*, *loc. cit.*

Hazāribāgh District of Bengal, where there are numerous Jaina temples, and where ten out of the twenty-four Jinas are said to have attained Nirvāṇa. Mount Abū in the Sirohī State, Rājputāna, is also a well-known and much frequented centre of pilgrimage, and here also are to be seen temples of great beauty and renown. The localities are sacred because of their connection with the Tīrthakaras, or with other Jaina saints.[1]

Jainism in its Relation to Popular Hinduism

The Jainas of the present day, although in theory atheistic, have in practice drawn so near to the surrounding Hinduism as to present outwardly little difference in modes of worship and in ritual. They have adopted many of the Hindu divinities, and in addition to the Jina pay divine honours to his chief disciples the Ganadharas. There exists also among them a female or goddess cult, similar to that of the Hindu S'akti. Jaina images and temples are to be found in many parts of India, especially in the south; and at one time the sect must have been much more numerous and powerful than it is at the present. The Jainas reject the Veda, but admit distinctions of caste. There is amongst them an indefinite, perhaps largely unconscious movement towards Hinduism, and a tendency to find for themselves a place amongst the many sects of the

[1] Pārasnāth is a corruption of Pārśvanātha, the name of the Jina preceding Mahāvīra. He was the last of the ten who here attained Nirvāṇa, and the hill was therefore named after him. It is stated that 10,000 pilgrims frequent the place every year, and that new shrines are still occasionally erected. The height of the hill is about 4,500 ft. There is an interesting narrative of an ascent of Pārasnāth in the year 1848 in Sir J. Hooker's *Himālayan Journals*, ch. i.; see also Bradley-Birt, *Chhota Nagpore*, ch. vi., and *IGI*[3], *ss.vv. Abū, Pārasnāth*.

dominant religion. Brāhman priests also are to be met with officiating in Jaina temples.

A comparison therefore of Jainism with Brāhmanism on the one hand and Buddhism on the other leads to the conclusion that it is in reality nearer to the former both in constitution and practice than to the latter. The resemblances to Buddhism, striking as they are, lie in great part upon the surface; the underlying differences penetrate to the very heart and centre of the two systems. The lives of the two founders, if Mahāvīra may be termed a founder, so curiously alike in their general course, diverge entirely in detail; and where they touch, the portraits and history are consistent with the supposition that they represent distinct and opposing teachers, but are with difficulty explicable if the one is a mere reflex or repetition of the other. Similarly the regulations and later history of the monastic order, the speculations and conclusions of the leaders of thought on either side, moved on parallel or slightly divergent but by no means on coincident lines. And the Church Councils on either side, in the little that is really known of them, bear no more resemblance to one another than is inevitable from the mere fact that they were Councils of the ecclesia.

Comparison with Buddhism and Brāhmanism

It is evident however that the two movements of Buddhism and Jainism had their origin in one and the same cause, namely a revolt from the domineering spirit and exclusive claims of the Brāhmans. Both had their roots in the more ancient system, and in different ways sought emancipation from its yoke. Nor were they alone in this desire for liberty. Others made the same attempt, and like them were stigmatized as heretics by the adherents

of the orthodox faith. These two creeds and philosophies however have survived in systematized form. The others have perished, or have been drawn back again into a comprehensive Hinduism. Jainism also is retrograding, and as it seems with accelerating pace. Buddhism alone has always stood its ground, and while borrowing has remained more markedly independent. There is evidence also that in the Middle Ages, in parts at least of India, the two faiths were by no means so unequally matched in influence and number of adherents as might be inferred from their respective positions at the present day. Jaina literature is comparatively little known, and presents few features of general interest. In its subjects and general treatment it bears a strong resemblance to the Buddhist, and both work on lines familiar to the older literature of India.

The general conclusion therefore with regard to the interrelation of the two faiths is not doubtful.

Conclusions

The Buddhist and Jaina systems have many characteristics and doctrines in common, and have probably in the past modified and influenced one another to a considerable extent. These resemblances however are mainly due to their contemporary origin, like causes producing like effects. The points of contact between the two religions are precisely those in which each is indebted to a pre-existing Brāhmanism. The likeness is that of a common descent. But while Jainism diverged comparatively little, and after a long resistance appears to be now succumbing to the attractions of its surroundings, Buddhism rapidly hardened into an elaborate system with greater independence and originality, and moving on broader and more generous lines

secured for itself a position and extent of influence which has enabled it to more than rival the mother faith from which it sprang.

LITERATURE.—H. Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras, SBE*, vols. xxii. and xlv., Oxford, 1884 and 1895; A. Weber, *Sacred Literature of the Jains*, London, 1893; J. G. Bühler and J. Burgess, *The Jainas*, London, 1893; S. Stevenson, *Notes on Modern Jainism*, Oxford, 1910.

CHAPTER VII

CONFUCIANISM

THE contrast between the Nearer and the Further East is nowhere more marked than between the two great peoples of India and China, whose dominant influence has determined and controlled the history of three-fourths at least of the continent of Asia, and has left no inconsiderable mark upon the Nearest East and upon Europe herself. In passing from the religious thought of India to a consideration of the religions of China, or perhaps it would be more correct to say of Confucianism, the practical creed of the cultivated educated portion of the Chinese people, and the sole philosophy which it is orthodox or patriotic to profess, entrance would seem to be gained into a new world. India is speculative, dreamy, mystical, other-worldly. China is practical, businesslike, with rules and precepts for present conduct, content that the other world shall be the care of those whose duty it is to concern themselves with it. The one looks forward, and would fain investigate the secrets and the destinies which the future has in store. The other is satisfied to live for and in the present, and regards the work and obligations of this life, here and now, as sufficiently exacting to require the concentration of all man's energies and thought. The mind of the one is abstract, reflective, pantheistic; that of the other is concrete, ethical, materialistic. Between schemes

China and India

of human thought and theories of human life there could hardly be a wider gulf than between Vedāntic speculation as interpreted by S'aṅkara, and the practical everyday philosophy with which Confucius would guide his fellow countrymen in the right way.

It must be remembered also that Confucianism is not, strictly speaking, a religion at all,—at least as expounded and set forth in its own acknowledged canons and authoritative books, whatever it may have become in the mind and practice of the ordinary worshipper at its shrines. These books recognise no deity as an object of worship, nor do they instruct man how he may enter into communion with the Supreme; they know no heaven, no hell, no spirit of man which may hope or fear for the hereafter, nor have they anything to tell of any world or life but the present. If these things and the doctrines concerning them, some or all of them, are a necessary part of any system or scheme of thought which claims the name of a religion,—as surely they are,—then Confucianism is not such. It is a philosophy, a system of ethics, a rule of right living for the present world, a compendium of directions for a clean upright moral life to be lived upon this earth, but not a religion. Nor did Confucius himself, as far as we know his real thought and teaching from the books and the traditions concerning him, ever profess to give more. He did not deny the existence of a God, a Supreme Ruler of the universe, or of a Hereafter. On the contrary, he appears to have explicitly recognised the first at least. He was not an atheist; but he was a confessed and pronounced agnostic. On these supra-mundane and speculative themes man can know nothing, and it is not wise to devote time

Confucianism not a Religion

and thought when no certain result is attainable. The true wisdom is to abstain from idle and fruitless speculation on subjects beyond the reach of human knowledge, and that a man should endeavour to live an honest and pure life in the position in which he finds himself in this present world.

Parallel Reform Movements in India and China

It is not without interest to note that apparently at about the same time in India and in China the practical spirit was awake and stirring, which urged upon man this turning away of his attention from musing upon the future and the unseen, and the concentration of energy and care upon the visible tangible present. The sixth century before Christ was in many respects a notable epoch in the history of the nations of the Far East. Gautama Buddha was born, according to the most acceptable computation, in the year 557 B.C.,[1] and lived and taught in protest against an abstract theorizing and a system that withdrew men from the world and sundered mutual helpfulness and sympathy. Confucius is said to have been born 551–0 B.C., seven years later; and as a practical politician and guide to have expounded the duties of citizenship, and enforced the mode of conduct which was incumbent upon the loyal member of the family and commonwealth. It is no doubt merely a coincidence, but one of no inconsiderable interest and significance, that in districts so widely removed from one another, and among peoples by nature and habit of life so different, two of the most influential teachers that the world has ever known should have devoted long and laborious lives to the elaboration and enforcement of systems

[1] *supra*, p. 436 f.

of life and doctrine which ignore the unseen and the spiritual.

The great Chinese teacher and philosopher was therefore the product of his age and people, and in all essential respects appears to have been typically Chinese. It is this fact without doubt which explains the influence and fascination which he has exercised for so many centuries over the Chinese mind. To whatever form or system of religion a true native of China may attach himself, whether Buddhist, Taoist, Muhammadan, or even Christian, he is and remains in the great majority of cases a Confucianist; and in the judgement of those best qualified to express an opinion, could a census of religions be held in China, the vast majority of the inhabitants would so return themselves. The cold inappreciative Western mind however does not find it easy to comprehend this fascination. To the European thinker or student of national life he appears a singularly colourless character, neither calculated to inspire or attract, nor possessed of sufficient force or individuality to repel. For some considerable period also after his death little attention appears to have been paid to his example and teachings. Since that time however his reputation and influence have steadily increased, until they culminated in the recent Imperial decree which raised him to the position of supreme honour and dignity as a third 'Assessor' with Heaven and Earth. For more than two thousand years, therefore, his example and reputed sayings have moulded the lives and dominated the wills of millions of human beings. The Chinese character has been determined after the construction and pattern of Confucian ethics. It would probably be a truism

Influence of Confucius

to say that upon no other people could so marked and stable an effect have been produced. The opportunity found the man no less than the man the opportunity. By Confucius, once and for all, were fixed the channels in which the habits of thought and life of the Chinese nation, whether social or political, should be contained ; and through all up-risings and revolutions, successions of dynasties, and invasions of foreign thought and manners, most importunate of course within recent years, Confucianism has remained essentially unchanged, and has been the strong bond of union which has welded the people into one, and has enabled a proud conservative peace-loving nation to resist aggression, and to maintain a common national life.

In this connection also a comparison might be instituted between Chinese and Indian experience and history. As in the former country the ethical system of Confucius, so in the latter the social system of caste imposed by Brāhmanism steadied and consolidated the national life, and in different ways enabled peoples so diverse to withstand pressure from without and to control or dominate protest or secession from within ; and thus in each case to maintain a real continuity of spirit and practice through many centuries.

Life and Character

Of *Confucius* himself and the incidents of his life, apart from his teaching, comparatively little is known. 'Confucius' is a Latinised form of his Chinese name *Kung-tsze*, or *Kung-fu-tsze*, 'fu' being an honorific addition. His system is known to the Chinese themselves as the 'School of the Learned' (*Ju-kiao*), and is characterised as orthodox, in contrast to all other systems or schools, as for example that of his great contemporary Lao-tsze, the 'School

of the Way' (*Tao-kiao*). His father was a military officer of the State of Lu, in the south-western part of the modern province of Shantung, which had been founded *c.* 1100 B.C., about six hundred years before the birth of Confucius, in the days of feudalism. The early part of his life, until the age of twenty or twenty-one, was spent in his native State, where he held for a short time in succession the offices of chief inspector of the State granaries and overseer of the public lands. He married early in life, and had one son. And he is reported to have shown his filial piety by mourning three years for the death of his mother, which occurred soon after he himself came of age.

The years that followed were devoted to literary work, and to the instruction of the band of students who gathered around him. More or less he lived the life of an itinerant teacher; and his travels are said to have extended to the capital city of the Empire, where he studied music. During the course of these travels also it is related that he came into personal contact with the mystical philosopher and teacher, Lao-tsze, whose metaphysical and speculative doctrines he professed himself unable to understand. In or about the year 500 B.C. by the appointment of the ruler of Lu he became a chief magistrate of the State, and held office for four or five years, first as Minister of Public Works, and subsequently as Minister of Justice, finally resigning his position when he found that the Prince neglected to follow his counsels. After his resignation he again left his native country, and passed from one State to another, endeavouring to persuade the several rulers to act upon his advice for the reformation of their laws and practice in accordance with ancient tradition and precedent. In this

apparently fruitless endeavour more than twelve years were spent. In 483 he returned to Lu, and devoted the remainder of his life to literary composition and criticism, including the record of the annals of his country known as *Spring and Autumn*, the only work, as far as is known, of which he was himself the author. He died in the year 478 B.C., and a temple was erected in his honour by the then reigning Prince of Lu.

The written traditions concerning him, the general credibility of which there is no reason to doubt, represent Confucius as a man of gentle and abstemious habits, virtuous, and kindly in disposition. He never sought to win popular applause, or in any way endeavoured to instruct or influence the people, concentrating his attention on the rulers, and seeking by example and precept to guide in the right way the disciples who attached themselves to him, and accompanied him in his journeyings. At no time apparently did he deliver public addresses, or teach by way of discourse or sermon; in this respect presenting a contrast to his great Indian contemporary, the founder of Buddhism. He made it his work to record political and ethical maxims, and to store up the wisdom and learning of ancient days for the benefit of those who should come after; to enforce the lessons which the experience of former times conveyed; and, while preserving and commending the doctrines and usages of the wise teachers of old, to add to them whatever his own insight and reflection suggested would be for the good of the State and the highest wellbeing of the citizens. He made no profession of being a religious leader or reformer. Upon the example of the past, its judgements and precedents, he placed the highest estimate; and he set himself

to codify its rules, and to hold up the mirror of the past for the benefit of his contemporaries and of future generations, that they might see reflected for their admiration and imitation a pattern of all right dealing and intercourse. The service which he thus rendered to literature and morals forms not the least of his claims to the gratitude of posterity.

Sacred Classics

The *Classical Literature* of Confucianism consists of nine works, of which only a comparatively small part makes any claim to have Confucius as its author. The greater portion is of altogether later origin. Within the whole of it there is contained undoubtedly older material to a more or less uncertain extent; but the later amplifications and additions can with difficulty, if at all, be separated from the more ancient substratum. Chinese tradition and belief, however, connects his name most closely with all the texts. His work in the main was probably that of careful selection and arrangement from a large mass of older literature; in part also this work may have been done by his immediate disciples under his own direction. By some European as well as native authorities the date of the earliest of the ancient records that were available to Confucius himself is believed to have been more than two thousand years before the beginning of our era. If this were true, the literature and records would cover a period of about a millennium and a half before his time.

The nine authoritative works of Confucianism are divided into two classes, *viz.* five *King*, a word that signifies canons or standards of the faith, and four *Shu* or books. The former, as the name would

suggest, are the most important and carry the greater weight; but the latter are the more popular and widely read, and on that account are believed to have been more really influential on the thought and practice of the people in general.

The five *King* are as follows:—

(1) *Yih-King*, or Book of Changes.
(2) *Shu-King*, Book of History.
(3) *Shi-King*, Book of Odes or Songs.
(4) *Ch'un-ts'iu*, Spring and Autumn, or Annals of the State of Lu.
(5) *Li-Ki*, Book of Rites.

The four *Shu*, although of secondary authority, occupy the first place in the order of the Chinese curriculum of studies:

(1) *Lun-yü*, Discourses, usually known as Analects; a collection or compilation of the sayings of Confucius, made by his disciples probably at some considerable time after his death.
(2) *Ta-Hsüeh*, or Great Learning.
(3) *Chung-yung*, or Doctrine of the Mean.
(4) *Meng-tsze*, or *Mencius*, a record in seven books of the life and words of Mencius, a disciple of Confucius, who lived about a century and a half later than his time.

The *Yih-King*, or 'Book of Changes,' is regarded as the oldest of the classics, and if difficulty of expression and style and fancifulness of allusion are proofs of antiquity, the claim is justified. The meaning is often inscrutable, perhaps owing to corruption to the text, and the doctrine highly mystical. The teaching of the Yih-King however forms the basis of Chinese cosmology, and far-fetched and speculative as it appears to be, the theory and principles which it enunciates are accepted

throughout China as the ultimate explanation and key to the universe and all it contains. The author of the work is said to have been a certain Wen Fang, who was also the founder of the Chou Dynasty, which held sway in China for more than eight hundred years, *circa* 1122-249 B.C. Its name is derived from the fact that it proposes to explain all the phenomena or 'changes' of nature and human life by means of certain diagrams or combinations of straight lines arranged horizontally. Each diagram or configuration of lines symbolizes one of the forces of nature, the wind fire water, etc. There were originally eight of these figures, arranged in triplet permutations of a line and a divided line, and they are said to have been invented by Fu Hsi, a philosopher or sage, who lived in the early part of the third millennium before our era, and is traditionally regarded as the original founder of the civilisation of China. Later by the successors of disciples of Fu Hsi the number of lines was doubled, and thus the number of possible combinations was increased to sixty-four; and on the significance of these sixty-four combinations the philosophical speculations of the Yih-King are based. It is more than doubtful however whether the real meaning of the diagrams, or the intention of their original inventor, whether Fu Hsi or another, is known.

The text of the book, as it has been preserved and is read in China at the present time, consists of brief chapters or essays explanatory of the significance and intention of the diagrams. The work is divided into two parts, of which the first is attributed to Wen Fang himself, and thus originated about the middle of the twelfth century B.C.; the second to his son Duke

Diagrams

Chou, who is said to have been the original author or compiler of the Chinese legal code. In both parts however the text is very difficult and obscure, and often consists apparently of mere formulae, *memoriae technicae* like the Sanskrit *sūtras*, which were never intended to be understood apart from the commentary or oral teaching, but which were to be learnt by heart, and thus to symbolize or serve as reminders of some important fact or doctrine. The indispensable commentary is more or less adequately furnished by the ten so-called 'wings,' expositions or commentaries on the text which Confucius himself is said to have composed late in life. The usual tradition records that the sage was greatly attracted by these mysterious figures, and spent much time meditating on their significance, and endeavouring to solve the enigmas which they presented. During all the centuries from his time until the present day Chinese scholars have found in them a favourite field for the exercise of their ingenuity. Their origin has been sometimes ascribed or conjectured to be due to an Indian source. The text itself is required to be treated with much reverence, and there is said to be an unwritten but traditional law which forbids its transmission across the sea.

Yang and Yin

If any real significance was originally attached to these lines and combinations of lines, it must have been of a mystical or magical nature. They have been supposed to indicate the mode or modes of application of some primitive system of divination. Their real origin is altogether obscure. In later times they were believed symbolically to set forth doctrines concerning the source and origin of all things, to indicate the course of human history and destiny, and in fact to provide the key, could their entire

meaning be unfolded, to the interpretation of the universe. In particular there came to be associated with them the dualistic principles which everywhere underlie the primitive speculation of China, and represent probably the earliest form which its religious and philosophic thought assumed. Thus the undivided line is the male principle in nature and the universe, *Yang*; the divided line is the female principle, *Yin*; and by the union of these all things are produced. *Yang* and *Yin* are in eternal opposition or contrast, and symbolize heaven and earth, light and dark, good and evil, etc. Their combination suggests the union of opposite qualities in one whole, associated together to a common end. *Yang* and *Yin* are the controlling forces of the universe, which by their interaction determine the fate of the animate and inanimate world. The same conception therefore, if rightly interpreted and applied, will provide the needful directions for wise and safe governments, will teach the true principles of nature and of religion, and will furnish a guide for human conduct in every department of life. There is indeed hardly any limit to the range of speculation and fancy in dealing with ideas so primitive and undefined.

The thoughts of Confucius himself on these subjects may rather be inferred from the commentary or appendices, which in substance at least, if not in form, there seems no reason to doubt give expression to his views. If this be so, it would appear to be unjust to charge him altogether with being an agnostic. As in the secondary classical books of Confucianism, so here there is apparent a certain tone or quality of indefiniteness, which often renders it difficult to be confident of the writer's meaning or conviction; whether he is conveying his own

settled thoughts, or hazarding suggestions for the consideration of others. This is true more particularly of references to the unseen and the spirit-world. Whatever the writer's own opinion or conviction may have been, he refuses to commit himself to a definite judgement, and argues that the practical claims and necessities of the present are sufficient to demand the entire energy and time which is at a man's disposal. Concentration of thought and care upon the past and speculation with regard to the future are alike immaterial and useless; present cares and right conduct under present conditions are the whole duty of man. The aim of the teaching is practical and ethical. As such its standard is high. And the inference to be drawn as to Confucius' own position and belief is that he was not really anti-theistic or in the strictest sense agnostic, but that he regarded the practical duties and obligations of life as those which it was all-important to enforce, and upon the spiritual and religious did not feel himself called upon directly to pronounce.

The second of the classics, the *Shu-King*, or Book of History, is not a methodical history or record of events, but a collection of documents, the selection and arrangement of which are attributed to Confucius; the motive of the whole being moral and political instruction, and the lessons to be drawn from the past for right behaviour under the social and economic conditions of the present. These extracts or documents cover a period of about 1,700 years, and in the judgement of most Chinese scholars contain ancient material, fragmentary and now distorted probably beyond recognition by the embellishments and legends which have gathered around a nucleus of authentic fact. The

earliest recorded date is that of the famed Emperor Yao, said to have reigned *circa* 2350 B.C.; the latest the record of an address made by a Prince Mu in the year 624 B.C., at no long period therefore before the birth of Confucius himself. There seems however to be no real evidence for associating his name with the book as author or compiler; and the tradition which ascribes the collection to his labours or initiative, though ancient, is not contemporary, and cannot be traced back beyond the beginning of the Christian era.

There are said to have been originally eighty-one documents, which were collected together and arranged in a hundred chapters. Of these however many were lost at the time of the burning of the books in the year 213 B.C. In its present form the *Shu-King* consists of fifty-eight chapters, containing forty-nine documents, together with a preface or introduction for which Confucian authorship is claimed. The chapters themselves do not supply either name of author or date; and the earlier of the legendary dates of dynasties and rulers can hardly be regarded as reliable. The first five chapters have reference to the reigns of the first Emperors Yao and Shun, and of Yü the Great, the so-called Golden Age of China; the four following to the Hsia Dynasty, *circa* 2005–1767 B.C.; chapters 10 to 26 inclusive to the Shang rulers, who succeeded, and held sway for about six hundred years; and the remaining thirty-two chapters cover the earlier half of the period of the Chow Dynasty, *circa* 1120–250 B.C. The general course of the history and fate of each dynasty is the same. A beginning is made with lofty aims and high ethical ideals of the functions of a sovereign ruler and of his relations to the people under his

care. These are maintained, and with more or less diligence put into practice, for two or three reigns; then follows a period of increasing degeneracy on the part of the rulers, accompanied by a decline in the general wellbeing and contentment of the people, which ends in confusion, revolution, and the establishment of a new Dynasty. The government of the country is of a feudal character, similar to the condition of Europe in the Middle Ages. Grouped around, and owing a more or less nominal allegiance to the central authority, are a number of semi-independent barons or chieftains, each of whom in his turn has his subjects or retainers, attached to the land and owing him fealty and service especially in war.

Religious and Ethical Teaching of the Shu-King

The contribution therefore which the Book of History makes to the general thought and guidance of the people is more on the side of morality and of even-handed justice than distinctively of religion. As also in all the literature that is imbued with the Confucian spirit, the ethical obligations expounded and enforced are rather those of the ruler than of the ruled. Higher considerations however are not left altogether out of sight. The Prince must care for the people entrusted to his charge, and must practise all just and righteous dealing towards them; but for the observance of the moral law, and for the fulfilment of his duties towards his subjects, he is in the ultimate issue responsible to Heaven. It is recognised that the Supreme is Himself just, and requires and rewards justice in the behaviour and actions of men. He shows favour towards the good, and is compassionate to the lowly and weak, and is displeased therefore with those who oppress them.

To Him worship and reverence are due. And man evidences true virtue and piety when he thus pays regard to the laws of Heaven, and is kindly and just towards his fellow men.

Two titles are employed to designate the great object of human reverence, 'Heaven' and 'Supreme Ruler.' It would appear that these names were understood to bear the same connotation, and they seem at times to be employed interchangeably. In one passage, in a chapter belonging to the beginning of the third dynasty, the expression familiar in later times 'Heaven and Earth' is found. Reference is made also to the worship of spirits, especially the spirits of the mountains and rivers. These occupy an altogether lower position, and neither in dignity nor in power are they equal to the highest; their influence however on human destiny is very considerable, and they need constantly to be propitiated. Regard for ancestors and the observance of the due ritual which their service demands have already assumed the position of a definite cult, a fact which bears witness to the ancient and deeply-rooted character of this feature in Chinese thought and life. The practice of divination moreover is universal, both in private life and in the policy and decisions of the State, and no important undertaking is initiated or carried out without consultation of the professional diviner. On the other hand there is no indication of the existence of a priestly class, set apart for the discharge of religious duties. As the Emperor is the supreme priest of the State religion and interpreter of the will of Heaven, so each head of a household officiates himself as priest, and presents his own sacrifice and offerings.

The *Shi-King*, or Book of Odes, is a collection of

305 lyrics or rhymed ballads, which are said to have been selected by Confucius himself from a larger collection of 3,000.[1] Of six others the titles only are known. It is not improbable that the tradition is founded upon fact, in so far as Confucius is known to have given much time and care to the study of poetry and composition, which he regarded as a pursuit worthy of a wise man, and as a valuable aid in the formation of a self-controlled and well-balanced mind. That he should have formed a collection of those ancient lyrics or odes which he regarded as most serviceable to this end would be entirely consonant to all that is known of his character and practice. Many of the odes also are judged from internal evidence to belong to a period anterior to the age in which he lived. The dates ascribed to them are very various, and little reliance can usually be placed on supposed details of circumstance or place. The greater number however are referred to the times of the Chow Dynasty, 1185–585 B.C.; and of one of the more ancient odes the date is carried back as far as 1720 B.C. In a later composition mention is made of an eclipse of the sun,

[1] The earliest form of the tradition is given by Dr. Legge in the introduction to his metrical rendering of the odes (London, 1876) :—'The old poems amounted to more than 3,000. Confucius removed those which were only repetitions of others, and selected those which would be serviceable for the inculcation of propriety and righteousness. Ascending as high as Sëeh and How-tseih, and descending through the prosperous eras of Yin and Chow to the times of decadence under kings Yëw and Le, he selected in all 305 pieces, which he sang over to his lute, to bring them into accordance with the musical style of the Shaou, the Woo, the Ya, and the Sung.' From this statement of the early Chinese writer Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *circa* 145 B.C., all later accounts are derived

the date of which is calculated to the summer (August 29) of the year 775 B.C. If these extreme dates may be trusted, the odes cover a period of at least a thousand years.[1]

The greater number of the odes are political, and deal with the duties and obligations of the State officials. Many however are thoroughly popular in character, and may claim the name of 'lyrics' in the fullest sense. Among the number are battle songs, and songs of love and wine. It is usual to classify them as Odes of the State, Odes of the Kingdom, and Sacrificial Odes. The last are in praise of dead men, princes of the house of Chow and others, and are therefore in reality allied to the usages and thoughts of ancestor worship. These are supposed to form the oldest part of the collection. The political odes lament the degeneracy of the times and of the State, exhort to righteous dealing, and hold up for imitation the example and practice of former days. None of the odes are of great length, consisting for the most part of no more than four or five stanzas or verses, of two four or more lines up to a maximum of seventeen. The lines themselves also are very short.

If a collection of popular and national poetry was really made by Confucius and put into circulation, it must have shared the fate of the other classical books in 312 B.C., and been committed to the flames. How far the extant collection truly represents the original, it is impossible to determine. Three copies are said to have been saved from the holocaust of literature, and to have been restored to light twenty years later after the dethronement and death of the tyrant Emperor. From these and a

[1] H. A. Giles, *Chinese Literature*, London, 1901, p. 17.

subsequently discovered text known as 'the Odes of Mao' more recent copies are derived.[1]

Religious Teaching of the Odes

Accordingly in the *Shi-King* also it may be expected that references to religious doctrines or thoughts will be incidental rather than direct. These however are entirely in harmony with the testimony of the other books, and bear witness to convictions and beliefs of the same character. Thus the 'Supreme Ruler' finds a place, and 'Heaven' as presiding over all; mention is made also of the God of War, and the aid of the inferior spirits is invoked and their wrath deprecated. More or less regular sacrifices are offered, and the general practice of ancestor worship is assumed. In some instances the odes addressed to departed rulers and others take the form of prayers for gifts and blessing, which it is therefore taken for granted that they are able to bestow. The odes therefore add their testimony to the early existence of the Chinese belief in a future life, which is both conscious and concerned in the fortunes of the living descendants of those who have passed into the other world.

The *Li-Ki*, or 'Book of Rites,' contains rules for life and conduct, which may be regarded as embodying the teaching of Confucius himself on these subjects, and are not improbably based upon real traditions or records derived from his immediate disciples. The compilation is said to have been effected within the two centuries before the beginning of the Christian era by two scholars and

[1] A full discussion of the interesting questions connected with the history and composition of the odes will be found in Dr. Legge's Introduction, *op. cit.*; cp. H. A. Giles, *Chinese Literature*, p. 12 ff.; L. Cranmer-Byng, *Book of Odes*, London, 1906.

cousins, named Tai; who out of the larger material at their disposal selected and arranged the work in its present form of forty-six sections or chapters, prescribing the details of social ritual and observance. Later changes and amplifications were of inconsiderable importance, and did not alter to any material extent the general character of the work.[1]

The *Ch'un-ts'iu*, 'Spring and Autumn,' or 'Annals of the State of Lu,' is usually regarded as the only classic which is the authentic product of the literary industry of Confucius himself. The other four King cannot claim more than to have preserved traditional sayings of the Master, or to owe more or less to his editorship. In the Ch'un-ts'iu he appears as historian of his native State of Lu; and the narrative or chronicle comprises the period between the years 722 B.C. and 484 B.C., or from the close of the history of the Shu-King to within a short time of the death of Confucius. The work however, as its author left it, was little more than a record of the more important events affecting the State, arranged in chronological order; to which later writers made additions of the nature of explanations and comments.[2]

There is no direct proof that the Ch'un-ts'iu was actually composed by the philosopher in the form approximately in which it is now extant. The tradition of his authorship is not unanimous. On the ground of the brief and unadorned character of the chronicle it has been said to be unworthy of the ability of Confucius. The appeal to internal evidence however fails, because there is no other authentic work of his composition with which it can be compared. A more serious objection appears to be that the true motive and

[1] Giles, *op. cit.*, p. 23 ff.

[2] Giles, *op. cit.*, p. 25 ff.; cp. G. Owen, *Bible in the World*, 1907, p. 143 ff.

character of events appears sometimes to be concealed or even misrepresented. The explanation of this which is offered on behalf of the author ascribes it to the 'etiquette of the chronicler,' according to which the credit of the ruling chieftain or prince must under all circumstances be maintained. Some of the native commentators also assert that it was in this way that Confucius expressed his disapproval of acts which he regarded as wrong or unworthy; open condemnation being impossible or politically dangerous, he simply omitted all reference to facts or proceedings which in his judgement were contrary to right dealing. The brief and bare statements of the chronicle seem however to suggest that a discussion of motives or general principles did not come within the plan of the author. The existing work is arranged in chapters or sections, each recording the events of successive years of the ruling Prince. Of these there are 237, grouped into twelve books, a book being devoted to each reign. A supplement or appendix records the death of Confucius, and carries the chronicle down to the year 463 B.C. After the destruction of the books a copy of the Ch'un-ts'iu is said to have been found in the year 154 B.C., together with the other classics, hidden in a wall of Confucius' house, from which all later copies have been derived. That a work under this title was in fact attributed to Confucius at an early date is witnessed by a reference in the writings of Mencius, who adds that it was composed during the last years of his life. The identity of the work known to Mencius with the later *Spring and Autumn* is of course uncertain.

The Confucian 'Books'

The second division of the Confucian Classics is formed by the four *Shu* or 'Books,' the general character and style of which seem to indicate a later date of composition, or at least of recension, than the King. They are also more practically important in the influence they have exerted on the thought and education of the Chinese nation. The student trained until recent years under the ancient unbending curriculum began his literary studies with the four *Shu*, and only after mastering these applied himself to the more serious

and difficult task of acquiring a knowledge of the five King.

The *Lun-yü* 'Discussions,' or as the title is usually rendered 'Analects,' presents the fullest and most reliable account that has been preserved of the life and teaching of Confucius. The work has been compared, both as to form and substance, to the Muhammadan *sunnat* or to the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon. In twenty short sections or books are recorded the utterances of the Master on political and social themes, giving his judgements on the duties and obligations of private and public life. These utterances are usually brief and sententious, as in the so-called opposite of the golden rule,—'what you would not others should do to you do not unto them,'[1]—and profess to give the actual words which the Master used. Their form however is for the most part literary rather than conversational or didactive, and the most that can be claimed for them is that they reflect the spirit of his teaching. They are said to have been collected together by his disciples and written down within a century of his death. The period of oral transmission was probably more prolonged than this tradition would suggest, and in their form and style at least the sayings owe much to the genius and labour of the succeeding generations of Confucian scholars. There seems no reason however to doubt that they represent truly the mind and intention of Confucius himself.

In the 'Analects' Confucius appears as the leader or teacher of a considerable band of adherents, intent on impressing upon them high moral standards of obligation and practice. The family is the

[1] Found also in the 'Doctrine of the Mean,' xiii.

miniature or microcosm of the State, and the reverent and dutiful behaviour which is incumbent upon the son towards his parents is in a larger and wider sphere due to the ruler of the State, and above all should manifest itself in reverence and piety towards Heaven. The highest ideals of truth and virtue are repeatedly emphasized; but it is especially in social life that opportunities for the exhibition of these characteristics are presented, and the mutual relations therefore of men one to another demanded the nobler qualities of purity, self-restraint, and an altruistic care for the common good. Confucius made no attempt to enforce his standard of right living by sanctions derived from the unseen or supernatural. Like Gautama Buddha he refused to be drawn into discussion or speculation with regard to another life or world than the present. His words however imply belief in a supreme power, Heaven; and right behaviour is due towards the gods, no less than towards men. The fulfilment however of the requirements and duties of the present should be man's first care, and Confucius would seem to have regarded this duty as sufficiently engrossing to leave no time or strength for a consideration of that which might lie beyond. His attention and instruction therefore were concentrated on the practical needs of the present life, how a man may best and most virtuously live in relation to his fellow men. And the picture which is presented of the Chinese philosopher is for the most part very pleasant, in familiar intercourse with his disciples, contented with a moderate way of life, cheerful and unassuming, and endeavouring ever to lead them to a fuller practice of the virtues

Character of Confucius in the 'Analects'

of piety, self-suppression, and regard for the interests and claims of others. His personality and teaching seem to have counted for comparatively little during the centuries immediately following his death. Thenceforward the influence of his doctrine and example rapidly increased, and has dominated and moulded the thought and habits of life of the Chinese nation more completely than perhaps any other nation has ever been led by a single man. History suggests three parallel instances of the commanding influence of a great teacher. In each case the influence has been wider, and has been communicated to more distant and alien peoples; it may be doubted whether it has been really more penetrative and determining than that of Confucius on the Chinese. In chronological order the three were Gautama Buddha in India, Jesus Christ in Palestine, and Muhammad in Arabia.[1]

The second of the 'Books' is known as *Ta Hsüeh* or 'Great Learning.' It is a part, section 39, of the Li-Ki, which has come to be separately circulated and studied, and forms a brief independent treatise on political and social ethics, of great value for the interpretation of the system of Confucius. The title is explained to mean 'Learning for great men,' *i.e.* for those who have advanced beyond the rudiments of knowledge. A considerable part of the

[1] The first complete study in English of the life and teachings of Confucius, with translation of the 'Analects,' was made by the late James Legge, for many years a missionary in China, and in later life Professor of Chinese in the University of Oxford. His rendering of the Chinese Classics, with introduction and commentary, is a monument of unwearying industry and learning. The translation of the 'Analects' is contained in vol. i., 2nd edition, Oxford, 1893. Cp. L. Giles, *Sayings of Confucius*, London, 1907; and H. A. Giles, *Chinese Literature*, p. 32 ff.

treatise consists of the quoted words and sayings of Confucius himself, and the remainder, for the most part in the form of illustration or commentary, is ascribed to Tsang Ts'an, one of the greatest of his disciples.[1]

The *Chung-yung*, 'Doctrine of the Mean,' is also extracted from the Book of Rites, of which it forms chapter twenty-eight.[2] The title 'Doctrine of the Mean' is rather descriptive of the subject-matter or a large part of the subject-matter of the treatise than a rendering of the Chinese name, which literally signifies the 'middle course,' *i.e.* of life, not inclining to either one or the other extreme. Essentially the work expounds similar doctrines to those found in the 'Analects' and the 'Great Learning,' but in a somewhat more formal and systematic way. Virtue and prosperity are best developed in 'states of equilibrium and harmony.' Man's moral nature and capacity is the gift of Heaven, and he must therefore by no means neglect it, but on the contrary must cultivate it to the utmost of his power. Detailed instruction is given as to the path of virtue and the duty of pursuing it. The *Chung-yung* is regarded as on the whole the best and most complete account of Confucian teaching and philosophy.

As in the other classical books much of the 'Doctrine of the Mean' consists essentially of the traditional sayings of Confucius himself, quoted or introduced by the formula 'The Master said,' or the like. The composition or editing of the work however is ascribed to the grandson of Confucius, K'ung Chi, the tutor and guide of Mencius, who

[1] Legge, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 ff., 355 ff.; H. A. Giles, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[2] The thirty-first, according to Dr. Legge, *l.c.*, p. 35.

inserted many original contributions of his own. The commentary and illustration form no part of the text of the chapter in the *Li-Ki*, which is very brief, and it would seem that the *Chung-yung* from an early period followed an independent course, and received independent study and elucidation.[1]

The last of the *Shu* is a record of the life and teaching of the philosopher Meng-tsze or *Mencius*, a follower of Confucius, who lived about a century and a half after his time. In its present form the work consists of seven books, but there are said to have been originally eleven, four having been lost. The date of the author's birth is given as 372 B.C., and he is said to have been a pupil of the grandson of Confucius, to whom is attributed the compilation of the *Chung-yung*. Like Confucius himself he adopted a public life, as statesman and minister of his native province of Chi, in modern Shantung; according to a variant tradition he was born in Lu, the home and native place of his great predecessor. At the age of about sixty years he abandoned the service of the State, and devoted himself to literary work and to the instruction of his numerous disciples. He is said to have become involved to a great extent in controversy with heretical teachers, whose arguments he successfully refuted. In his teaching he lays considerable stress on the natural goodness of the human disposition, and points to the example of perfect men of former times, of whom Confucius was the chief; the well-disciplined and flawless life and character to which they attained is within the reach of all men. Essentially his philosophy

Mencius

[1] Legge, pp. 35 ff., 382 ff.; H. A. Giles, *l.c.*, p. 41 f.; Ku Hung Ming, *Conduct of Life*, London, 1908.

of life repeats and interprets that of Confucius. Like him also he recognises the supreme will and power of Heaven above and beyond all. His references to Heaven however are almost formal and perfunctory, and have little of the ring of real conviction.[1]

Burning of the Books

A general holocaust of the sacred writings, the so-called 'burning of the books,' is said to have been carried out by the orders of the 'First Emperor,' a ruler of the State of Ch'in, who towards the end of the third century before our era succeeded in extending his sway over the whole of China. By destroying the records of the past he proposed to establish and confirm a new epoch or mode of dating, which should have his own reign as its starting-point. Copies of the Confucian Classics were however concealed privately by scholars who disapproved of the Emperor's action and ventured to disregard his orders. After his death in 210 B.C., and the overthrow of his dynasty a few years later by the Han rulers, who favoured and protected literature, these copies were produced or discovered, and the canon of the sacred texts re-established. Similar accounts of the destruction by fire of ancient literature at the hands of barbarian or unsympathetic rulers are met with elsewhere, as for example in Persia and Egypt

Confucianism depicted in the Classics

Confucianism therefore is ultimately based upon the teaching of Confucius himself as recorded in the Classical Books, which there is no reason to doubt have faithfully preserved the tradition of the doctrine and manner of life of the Master. The social and ethical system and rule which he enforced can hardly claim to be regarded as a religious faith, nor in all probability was it devised or intended

[1] J. Legge, *Chinese Classics*, vol. ii.[2], Oxford, 1895; H. A. Giles, *Chinese Literature*, p. 35 ff.

for that purpose. Into its later history however, a history of progressive but conservative development that never lost its hold of its own early principles and beginnings, many elements have entered from various and in part obscure sources to form a system of practical religious observance and creed which has proved itself pre-eminently fitted to the genius of the Chinese people. It is not always easy to disentangle these, or to assign to each historically its place and origin. Confucius himself, as far as it is possible to form a just estimate of his character, was essentially and perhaps typically the product of his age. He moved easily and naturally among the men of his own time, because he was so entirely one with them. The background of his teaching, the thoughts to which he gave expression, the duties and habits of life which he enjoined, were in all essential respects the thoughts, the usages, the proprieties and standards of the period at which he lived. To style him the founder of a religion would be entirely to misrepresent his position and teaching; and it would probably be equally misleading to claim for him in regard to precept or doctrine any considerable measure of originality. He took the best of that which he found ready to his hand, and consistently enforced it as the right rule of an honourable and useful life. His title, therefore, is that of a reformer of manners, a preacher of moral and practical righteousness, a patriot and lover of his people, who clearly saw that true happiness and prosperity were not to be dissociated from purity of conduct and character, and who accordingly devoted a long life to expounding and enforcing the principles of right behaviour in all the mutual relations of the family and community. In particular, as far as personal

creed and practice were concerned, he appears simply to have adopted the two leading elements of popular and national belief, and to have moulded and systematized them into an elaborate and far-reaching code of ethics. The ethical teaching of Confucius has deservedly taken a high place among the systems, moral but certainly not religious in the ordinarily accepted meaning of the term, which the world has known.

Fundamental Elements of Confucian Teaching

These two elements of belief, in respect to neither of which is Confucius to be regarded as an innovator, as introducing either novel practice or creed, were belief in a Supreme Power, unseen but all-seeing, accompanied by a wider and more informal Nature worship, and reverence for ancestors. Two names were in use in ancient China to denote the supreme all-powerful controller of the universe, the one more abstract and impersonal, the other personal and modelled apparently on the Imperial conception as realised in human experience. The former was *Tien*, the broad stretching sky, that in many of the descriptions given recalls the Vedic *Varuna*. Historically it appears probable that this was the older representation. The second term was *Shang Ti*, 'Supreme Ruler,' who in all respects was conceived and described in anthropomorphic terms, and in whom a theistic belief in a personal god found expression. It cannot be proved that the latter conception found favour with Confucius, or was ever clearly entertained by him. The broad heavens, ever peaceful untroubled unchanging, would seem to have symbolized more justly to his mind the supreme Over-ruler, in majestic dignity and calm, than the comparison, remote though it might be,

with an earthly monarch, subject to fits of passion and incalculable changes of fortune.

The earlier Chinese also, long before the age of Confucius, like all primitive peoples whether of ancient or modern times, believed in the existence of a multitude of spirits, nature gods, presiding over and in the earth, the air, the sky, or the waters. They felt themselves to be in the presence of a vague spiritual world, of the extent and character of which they were able to give little definition. In this respect also Confucius can hardly have been other than a sharer in the prevalent beliefs. His works however, or the works attributed to him, offer little positive or direct evidence on the subject. As has been suggested above, it would seem that of set purpose he discouraged speculation, and he exhibited always a strange reluctance to enter upon questions involving man's relation to the unseen, or the constitution and claims of a world beyond or outside of the visible universe. Perhaps it was on the same principle that his manifest faith in a Supreme Ruler never led him to assign to the latter personal attributes or functions, or to regard him apparently as in any way actively interfering in the affairs of men. And the vagueness of the literary reference, in which no definition is offered of the Supreme, or his being or nature in any way explained, cannot but suggest a corresponding vagueness of conception in the mind of Confucius himself. Whether he believed that prayer was heard, and availed to secure the desired ends, is doubtful. He however regularly offered sacrifice, and is said always to have done so with reverence, as if the spirits of the dead were actually present. His belief in the spiritual world was further evidenced by his zealous practice of divination, of which he is

said to have made a special study. When he was questioned however with regard to the future destiny of man, he again refused to commit himself, or to enter into discussion; although clearly ancestor-worship in any shape or form logically involved belief in a conscious existence after death. Nor did he formulate any more definite doctrine of rewards and punishments than to declare that for good deeds recompense awaited the good, while the evil would be dealt with according to their deserts; all was in the hands of Heaven, the supreme arbiter of destiny, and the dispenser of life and death to all. That Confucius was himself therefore a fatalist, and taught a doctrine of fatalism, it would probably be wrong to affirm. But he was an opportunist, in the sense that he desired and urged that conduct should be moulded to circumstances, and that these would be taken account of in the delivery of judgement. Live well; make the best of the present; do your duty; cultivate habits of moderation temperance and virtue; avoid the extremes; expect and strive to obtain the immortality of a good name in this world, for of other immortality you have no knowledge and no certainty; do good, for you may be sure that in the long run your sin will find you out. Thus it was the duties of a life of practical moderation and virtue, the end of which was temporal and personal happiness, that Confucius inculcated; and this has been the Confucian ideal up to the present. And it was the worldly-wise and practical nature of his teaching which has been the secret of his popularity and influence among so many generations of his fellow countrymen.

The second element of commanding importance

from a religious point of view in the teaching of Confucius, and in the scheme of belief and practice which his followers have elaborated, is ancestor worship. In this respect also it may be readily shown that in commending reverence for ancestors Confucius introduced no new principle of belief. From ancient times the Chinese people have been remarkable for their filial piety, and in the faith and observance of no other nation has regard for ancestors and the practice of worship at their tombs been more generally and fully developed. Insomuch that some high authorities have maintained that the real practical religion of the Chinese was neither Confucianism, nor Taoism, nor Buddhism, but ancestor worship. Both the cult of ancestors therefore, and the belief on which it is founded, existed in China before the time of Confucius, and in all probability were combined in ancient and well-established usage in his day. In adopting and enforcing by his own example as well as by precept the duty of reverence not only to living parents but to the family ancestors who have passed away, he systematized and gave permanent sanction to customs which usage had already declared more or less obligatory, and which probably already for a long time had formed part of the cherished observances of the people. He is said to have observed a three years' period of mourning for his mother. It is not unconnected also with the same tendency of feeling that he taught the duty of reverence for all who were distinguished for wisdom or nobility of character.

Ancestor Worship

In every Chinese house the ancestral tablet has represented the most potent force determining the conduct and lives of the inmates. Where

European influence has been strong, and in proportion to its strength, there the active power of the ancestral cult has declined. Apart however from foreign teaching and example, which until recent times has been very slightly effective, the worship of ancestors which expressed itself in the attitude of humility and supplication, bowing down before the tablet that enshrined their names, has been the most important obligation of every native of China, and has been conscientiously and punctiliously observed. Until within a few years the tablet of Confucius also was set up in the house, and reverential homage paid before it. With the elevation of Confucius to the rank of Heaven and Earth, this household worship ceased to be reasonable or efficacious, and was no longer required of or permitted to the ordinary householder as part of his religious observance and duty.

Later History

The death of the great reformer was not followed by any immediate or striking expansion of the influence of the teaching or cult which he had devoted his life to expound. It is recorded that although a temple was erected in his honour by the local ruler of the State of Lu, by the Emperor himself no notice was taken of the event. It is evident however that the seed which Confucius had sown had fallen on good ground, and that if it lay dormant for a considerable period it was to wake later to extraordinary and permanent fruitfulness. It is evident also that in his teaching, and in the emphasis which he laid on the practical life of morality and self-dependence, he had rightly gauged the character and disposition of his fellow countrymen. The principles which he inculcated have remained the principles of Confucianism, faithfully preserved and

rigidly acted upon, to the present day. There was indeed little opportunity or possibility of development upon the lines which he laid down, and the universal study and paramount authority of the classical literature in which that teaching was enshrined prevented any serious declination from its standards.

The revival of the popularity and influence of his system apparently began some considerable time after his death with the growing practice of making pilgrimages to his tomb, and in course of time the tomb became the centre of an extensive and permanent settlement. During these early centuries the rival system of Taoism with its mystical philosophy seems to have predominated; and this was followed by a period during which the two systems existed side by side, perhaps without much mutual intercourse or to any great extent influencing one another, since they made their appeal to different characteristics of mind and thought. The final victory of Confucianism appears to have become assured in the reaction that followed on the burning of the books and the accompanying massacre of the scholars at the end of the third or beginning of the second century before the Christian era. At or about the commencement of our era the Confucian cult occupied in China a position of acknowledged pre-eminence, and in spite of the growth and temporary popularity of the three great religious systems of foreign origin introduced from without, which gained a more or less permanent footing within the Chinese Empire, Buddhism Christianity and Muhammadanism, that supremacy has never been seriously challenged, or the hold of Confucianism upon the heart and mind of the people shaken, from that day to the present

time. In the twelfth century Chu Hi, a great philosopher and reformer, gave a fresh and powerful impulse to the study of the works and system of Confucius, and established more firmly than ever the prestige and influence of the latter as the sole medium of literary culture or of intellectual life and progress. The revived interest which he created, and the zeal and enthusiasm with which he enforced the Confucian system, led to its becoming the accepted creed of all classes within the Empire from the highest to the lowest. Whether Buddhist or Taoist, or even Muhammadan, in the essentials of his thinking and belief practically every Chinaman is, or has been until the recent invasion of Western principles and habits of thought, a follower of Confucius.

Confucianism a System of Ethics

Confucianism therefore, in the conception and teaching of the founder himself, was less a religion in the more exact acceptation of the term than a system of moral ethics, applied to personal conduct and to the regulation and management of the State. While faithful however to its original principles, there have been engrafted upon the system ideas and practices derived not only from popular folk-lore and superstition, but also from other philosophical and religious systems, of which Buddhism was the chief. These entered China in later years and at different epochs, but for a time at least to a greater or less degree commended themselves to the belief of the people, and contested with earlier faiths the right to their affection and obedience. None of these contributions however was comparable in extent or permanence of influence to that of Taoism, the indigenous philosophy of China, which in its origin

antedates Confucius himself.[1] The mystical system of the *Tao* or Way, *i.e.* the Way of Heaven, ascribed to Lao-tsze, who is said to have lived half a century before Confucius, and some of whose profound mystical sayings bear so remarkable a resemblance to the doctrines of Plato, or anticipate the most generous and broad-minded utterances of the New Testament, has become so closely intertwined with Confucianism that in the judgement of many scholars the exact limits of the contributions made by each to the resultant system of creed and observance cannot now be disentangled. The most important later contribution was from Buddhist teaching. And while essential differences exist, these three together, Taoism Confucianism and Buddhism,—the three religions of China, as they have sometimes been called,—form a connected and in some respects closely articulated whole, the several elements of which cannot always be assigned with confidence to their respective sources. Even until recent times this interchange of thought and function has proceeded. Buddhist and Taoist priests, for example, perform religious duties in common and officiate at common altars.[2]

Relation to the State

Confucianism in general therefore, in so far as it has any claim to be regarded as a religious system, is a political or State cult, of which the Emperor is the head. His unique title is 'Son of Heaven.' It recognises the presence and existence of

[1] *infra*, p. 661 ff.

[2] The appropriation by the Government of many Buddhist and other temples for the purposes of modern education has naturally had great and permanent consequences for the status and influence of the resident priests. But it has not affected the mutual relations of the two religions.

many gods, *shen*, deities of the natural and visible powers or phenomena of the universe, and in this sense therefore is polytheistic. Heaven however, *Tien* or *Shangti*, 'supreme Lord,' is the higher Shen, the ultimate source of all light and life, the guardian and upholder of the dignity and throne of his Son; and the latter is Heaven's representative, his vicegerent and high-priest upon earth, to whom in this capacity all the kingdoms of the earth belong, as universal and sole lord of all. Besides the *shen* there are innumerable inferior powers, *kwei*, whose attributes are very various, malevolent or merely mischievous, whose interference in human affairs is deprecated, and whose wrath must by every possible means be appeased. In these respects Confucianism is merely grafted upon a primitive animistic stock.

As the representative and son of Heaven, the Emperor alone has the right to sacrifice to Heaven and Earth, the deities of the highest rank. To the former he pays homage as his son and heir, the latter he worships in token of unique claim to absolute and universal earthly sovereignty. In these two offices none can stand by him or take his place, and in a certain sense he may be said to represent and officiate for the people. This formal and solemn ritual of worship is essentially a form of ancestor cult, since the Emperor offers sacrifice by virtue of his solar lineage, and prostrates himself before his great Father, the primeval source of all being and life. In this character also, as Heaven's son, to whom is deputed accordingly supreme authority and right to determine all, the Emperor issued the recent edict, elevating Confucius to the rank of Heaven and Earth, whose worship therefore may be conducted by himself alone. Whatever the real

motive and inspiration of the edict may have been, its practical effect is to remove the cult of the sage from the colleges and halls, from the palaces and courts and houses, where his tablet had hitherto found a place by the side of the ancestral tablets of the family. In every building and home the Confucian tablet had been the symbol of a universal and perpetual obligation. And the adherent of another creed or faith is accordingly by the edict released from the necessity of bowing down before the name and memorial of the sage when he approaches the ancient or modern seats of learning, and takes his place in college or lecture-hall. Its promulgation therefore was a real concession to freedom of thought and belief, and an acknowledgement of the growing influence of education and a broader conception of the meaning of religion and life.

The most important and significant ritual is that which is annually observed at the time of the winter solstice, when the Emperor renders sacrifice on the great altar of Heaven at Pekin. **Ritual** Offerings and libations are solemnly presented by the Emperor standing before the altar to the spirit of Heaven and the spirits of his ancestors, in accordance with an ancient and highly elaborate ceremonial. The offerings themselves are burnt in the fire, while the Emperor prostrates himself before the altar and prays.[1] The altar itself consists of three circular and concentric terraces of marble, rising one above the other with diminishing diameter. On the uppermost terrace stands the wooden tablet of Heaven, and on the east and west sides are similar tablets to the ancestors of the

[1] For a description of the ritual observed see J. J. de Groot in *De la Saussaye*[3], i. p. 57 ff., or *ERE*, iv. p. 13.

reigning Emperor. Around the second terrace are ranged the tablets of the sun, moon, and planets, together with those of the principal constellations and stars. The great celestial altar at Pekin is the largest altar in the world, and the annual sacrifice thereon holds the first place in the religious ritual of China. Less important and formal offerings are presented at other seasons also by the Emperor, on his own behalf and for the welfare of the State, to the sun and other divinities, and to his deceased ancestors.

The Imperial sacrifice to Earth, offered annually at the summer solstice, holds the second place in importance in the Confucian ritual. The great altar dedicated to Earth is of marble, square in form, and stands outside of the north wall of Pekin. It bears the tablet of Earth, and of the Emperor's ancestors; on the lower terrace are tablets to the earth-gods, and the divinities of the seas and rivers. The manner of the observance and the order of the ceremonies is of the same character in all the great sacrifices; but the offerings to Earth are buried, not consumed by fire as are those presented to Heaven. At the season of the new year also offerings are made to Earth, but on a less formal and elaborate scale, and at other anniversaries. Similar worship is presented, with sacrifice and ritual observance, at the graves of the ancestors of the reigning family. Heaven and Earth therefore may be regarded as the chief divinities to whom homage is paid. In a lower order of importance and consideration is the cult of the ancestors, who are thus held in continual remembrance, and command the dutiful reverence of their descendants.

The dependence of the inhabitants upon the

fertility of the land for livelihood and prosperity is further indicated by the prominent position assigned to deities of the crops and fields, of the flocks and herds. All the materials and operations of husbandry are under the protection of special divinities, whose kindly aid must be sought by sacrifice and prayer. To these also special altars are assigned, in some instances within the palace walls. Spring and autumn are the most important seasons of sacrifice. Other occasions however are observed; and in particular the favour of the god of rain is sought, if there should be any failure of the early summer showers necessary to the growing crops.

Nature Deities

On a smaller scale and with less pomp similar offerings are presented on altars erected in all the chief cities of the Empire. Sacrifice is rendered to deities of lower rank, personifications of the forces or phenomena of nature, to deified ancestors, and to great men of ancient times whose achievements and benefactions have been deemed worthy of perpetual remembrance. Of nature divinities the sun and the moon hold the first place, and among the ancestors to whom general worship is paid the chief are the early Emperors and Confucius himself. Most of these observances are annual, and follow an appointed succession at stated periods of the month or year, at new or full moon, spring or autumn, the equinoxes or solstices. The total number of the sacrifices is very great. The worship of the planets and of the various deities of the mountains, the rivers, the clouds, etc., holds a place at numerous temples and shrines widely distributed over the whole country, and may be described as of less general significance, although not perhaps less

Local Altars

generally practised. Finally there are temples and altars with special ritual and offerings in common to the spirits of the dead. Within the family circle the close of certain defined periods after a death is marked by the performance of ceremonies and the offering up of prayers either in the house or at the ancestral temple. The anniversary of the day of death also is usually kept in remembrance, and the good-will and aid of the deceased ancestor is sought for his living descendants.

Religious Element adopted into Confucianism

Thus Confucianism is a real force, at least on the side of ethics and a practical view of life regulated by precepts of morality and mutual consideration. That it rises no higher, and takes no account of the spiritual world, or of a future the conditions of which may be determined more or less certainly by character and behaviour in this,—doctrines and considerations upon which all religious thought lays stress,—is part of the studied intention of the founder, who had no light or teaching to impart upon these subjects, and definitely foreclosed inquiry. In one respect therefore, and that of supreme importance, Confucianism, as expounded and enforced by Confucius himself, fails to answer to the definition of a religion, however loosely it may be framed. Apart from ancestral worship the elements of the supernatural which it has adopted, or rather retained, belong to the general scheme or conceptions of animism, the principles and observances of which, so far from being peculiar to China or grafted upon Confucianism, are universally prevalent among peoples in an early stage of knowledge and culture, and in his native land must have attained considerable development long before the time of

Confucius. It would be a more correct statement of the case to say that the moral and intellectual teaching of the sage was grafted upon animistic tendencies and observances too deeply rooted in the thought and practice of the people to be expelled. The ethical system gave direction to the thoughts and ideas of animism, and as far as possible controlled and reformed them. And with regard to ancestor worship also, although it may be rightly maintained that it implies belief in the supernatural and in another world, Confucius seems to have proposed to himself as far as is in him lay to divest the doctrine of such necessary connotation, and to present it merely in its practical aspects as an exhibition of due reverence for those to whom reverence was especially due, and a help in the formation of right habits of mind and character.

On the other hand, the Confucian ethical system is simpler and more refined both in spirit and expression than that of perhaps any other non-Christian system of ancient times. Of all the sacred books of any nationality or religion that have come down to us, the Hebrew Scriptures themselves being no exception, the Confucian Classics alone are absolutely free from suggestion or narrative that is immoral, and may be read through from beginning to end without even a remote prompting to thoughts or reminder of manners that fall short of the highest ethical standard. Compared with other sacred writings of antiquity, Indian especially, this is no small praise. In practice however Confucianism has combined many elements from various sources, as has been shown above. The resultant system, or fusion of miscellaneous beliefs and observances, has perhaps more claim to the title of a religion, in the stricter sense of the term,

than the purer ethics of the books. The latter holds a high place among the systems of moral rule and precept which have been expounded for the edification and instruction of mankind.

LITERATURE.—The most comprehensive summary in brief is contained in the work of J. J. M. De Groot, *Religion of the Chinese*, New York, 1910; cp. the same author's article in *ERE*, vol. iv., and *ib.* art. 'Confucius' by W. G. Walshe. Reference may be made also to E. H. Parker, *China and Religion*, London, 1905; J. Ross, *Original Religion of China*, Edinburgh and London, 1909; W. A. Cornaby, *String of Chinese Peach-Stones*, London, 1895; R. K. Douglas, *Confucianism and Taouism*, 1906; E. Faber, *Mind of Mencius*, 1882.

CHAPTER VIII

TAOISM

Of the Chinese thinker and mystic Lao-tsze, the reputed author and founder of the system of religious philosophy known as Taoism, no authentic account seems to have been preserved. The few incidents of his life recorded by disciples who wrote several centuries after his death may or may not have preserved a true tradition; but in any case give little information with regard to the man himself. He is said to have been a native of the State of Khû in the north of China, where he lived in comparative retirement a life of meditation and study, about the beginning of the sixth century before our era. He was therefore some fifty years senior to Confucius, and the tradition that the latter visited him in his home and sought instruction from him concerning his thought and teaching is almost certainly without foundation.[1] Other details that are recorded of his history and life bear evidence of the influence of Buddhist traditions, or even indirectly of narratives that may be traced

Life of Lao-tsze

[1] *SBE*, xxxix. p. 354. The tradition is recorded by Kwang-tsze, and represents Confucius in his fifty-first year as visiting the older philosopher, and learning from him the doctrine of the Tao, which he acknowledges that he has sought in vain for many years. The narrative is evidently written in commendation of Taoist principles, and is inconsistent with all that is known of the character of Confucius. The supposed date also of the visit would seem to place it beyond the limits of probability.

to a Christian source. Thus he is said to have been born of a virgin mother who conceived him under celestial and stellar influence. In extreme old age he withdrew from his native State, having first composed a work in exposition of his principles; and neither the place nor the manner of his death is known.

Character of the Founder and his Religion

It is evident however that Lao-tsze was a mystic and an idealist, an Eastern sage, whose mind and thought were steeped in the true spirit of the East, dreamy and speculative. It is interesting to note that the sixth century before our era witnessed the rise and somewhat widespread prevalence in distant lands of speculation concerning the origin and constitution of the universe, the destiny of man, and the being of God. In North India at least and in Greece the age was marked by the uprisings of a thoughtful protest against materialism and contentment with this world. And the likeness has often been pointed out between the conceptions which found expression in Lao-tsze's doctrine of the Tao and the Ideas of Plato. Taoism moreover so early and closely came into contact with Buddhism, especially in the more spiritual and speculative form of the Mahāyāna, that it is not always easy to separate the two strands of thought and practice, or to disentangle the original from the derivative. The strong influence of the latter is apparent in many ways. And on the other hand there can be as little doubt that Taoist teaching and the prevalence of Taoist modes of thought prepared the way for the reception of Buddhist doctrine in China, where an unyielding system of agnostic ethics as embodied in Confucianism might have presented an insuperable bar.

In Taoism also, as in Buddhism itself, and perhaps even more than in the latter, it is difficult or even impossible to distinguish the contributions of the more or less immediate disciples and followers of the founder from the original. The thinkers who succeeded Lao-tsze expounded and expanded his system, and on the lines which he laid down gave to his thought a development and completion which, while it has greatly added to its comprehensiveness and interest, has left it uncertain how far precisely he himself carried the teaching which is permanently associated with his name. In a similar way many would deny to Gautama Buddha the real authorship of some of the most characteristic doctrines of Buddhism. Of these later Taoist philosophers the most important was the scholar and mystic Kwang-tsze, who lived about two hundred years after Lao-tsze, and devoted himself to the exposition and illustration of the doctrine of the Tao. His teaching forms an essential part of the system of Taoism in its interpretation of the universe, and of the relation of the human soul to the Divine.[1]

Contribution of his Successors

The fundamental work on the principles of the Tao, the authorship of which is attributed to Lao-tsze himself, is known as the Tao-te-ching, or 'Treatise of the Way and of Virtue,' as the title is rendered by Mr. Giles.[2] The substantial genuineness and authenticity of the work were maintained by the late Dr. J. Legge,[3] who in the Introduction

Literature: Tao-te-Ching

[1] See J. Legge in *SBE*, xxxix. pp. 9–12, 127 ff., xl. pp. 1–232; L. Giles, *Musings of a Chinese Mystic*, London, 1906; H. A. Giles, *Chinese Literature*, London, 1901, p. 60 ff.

[2] *Sayings of Lao Tzŭ*, London, 1906, p. 10.

[3] *SBE*, xxxix. p. xiv.

to his translation gives an account of the native Chinese commentaries and expositions. It seems to be generally conceded that the book contains at least a nucleus of genuine sayings of Lao-tsze, which have been added to and supplemented by later scholars. A tradition is recorded by the historian Ssu-ma-chien at the beginning of the first century before our era that Lao-tsze was the author of a treatise on philosophy written in five thousand or more words. Such a work, regarded as a sacred classic, appears to have been known and held in honour a century before his time. An authoritative treatise however, believed to embody the teachings and to be due to the hand of Lao-tsze himself, would hardly be likely to have escaped destruction at the time of the burning of the books.[1] The character of the work itself also would suggest rather a restoration from fragments more or less imperfectly revived in memory or saved from the overthrow. A later ruler, Kublai Khan, the famous Mongol conqueror and patron of Buddhism in the thirteenth century, is said to have excepted the Tao-te-ching from a decree of destruction issued against all Taoist books.[2]

The differences between the two most recent English versions of the Tao-te-ching, those of the late Dr. Legge and Mr. L. Giles, sufficiently illustrate the obscurity and difficulty of the original.[3] Dr. Legge gives as the sub-title

[1] *supra*, p. 644.

[2] See also the Introduction of L. Giles, *op. cit.*

[3] *SBE*, vol. xxxix. pp. 46–124; *Sayings of Lao Tzŭ*, 1906; cp. J. J. M. de Groot in De la Saussaye's *Lehrbuch*[3], i. p. 92, who renders the title 'Buch der Segnungen des Tao'; H. A. Giles, *Chinese Literature*, p. 57 ff. A recent and admirable German rendering, with Introduction and explanatory Notes, is by R. Wilhelm, *Das Buch vom Sinn und Leben*, Jena, 1911.

of the treatise, or rendering of its name 'the Tao and its Characteristics.' The first part attempts to explain the meaning of the Tao, both as it is in itself, and as it is revealed in the world. In the former aspect, the Tao is nameless, unknown and unknowable, mysterious, unfathomable. Amongst men it receives a name, and may be described as the principle of 'virtue,' right dealing, the doing unto others as you would they should do unto you. The application of the principle of the Tao in some of the chief departments of human life, as those of Government and War, forms the subject of later chapters. In relation to the former emphasis is laid upon the rights of the individual in private matters as against the dominant control of the State. Hatred of war is inculcated, and a love of the arts of peace. The whole is closed by a series of reflections on the greatness and advantages of the Tao, which are partly apologetic, but in the main commendatory and expository. From a moral and ethical point of view the treatise is worthy to rank with the best of the Confucian Classics.

Kwang-tsze

Second only in importance to the Tao-te-ching for the statement and history of Taoist doctrine, and perhaps hardly second even to this work in which have been preserved, though in fragmentary and incomplete form, the thought and teaching of the founder of Taoism himself, are the writings of the greatest of his successors, Kwang-tsze. The latter lived about two hundred years after Lao-tsze, and was thus a contemporary of the philosopher Mencius, with whom however he seems never to have come into contact. He is said to have lived the quiet and retired life of a thinker and scholar, devoting himself to literary composition, and to the exposition and defence of the principles of the Tao; and to have refused to hold office or to take any part in the government of the State. To the Confucian doctrine of the day he was unalterably opposed, and controverted it in his writings with

all the resources of conviction and eloquence. His contribution to Taoist doctrine was distinctly of a mystical and metaphysical character; and in this respect his position may perhaps be compared to that of Buddhaghosha in Buddhist history.

The extant work of Kwang-tsze consists of three unequal parts or volumes, with a total of thirty-three chapters. The first part extends to seven chapters, and is entitled 'The Inner.' It contains the kernel of his philosophical teaching, set forth in a rhetorical style, often in dialogue form, with much earnestness and many illustrations. The second part, 'The Outer,' consists of fifteen chapters; and the third, 'Miscellaneous,' of eleven. These last two parts supplement and further illustrate the principles expounded in the first, and do not make any essentially new contribution. Like the Tao-te-ching, the writings of Kwang-tsze were held in the highest esteem among the Taoists, and might be said to form their accepted Canon and rule of faith.[1]

Later Taoist Literature

Of later Taoist writings, treatises in the form of philosophical discussions, tracts polemical or apologetic, moral and ethical meditations and exhortations, the number is great. None of them however is of a value or importance for the origin and history of Taoism equal to that of the reputed works of the founder himself and of Kwang-tsze. Perhaps the greatest interest and worth attach to the mystical writings of Lieh Tzu, apparently a contemporary of Kwang-tsze, to whom reference is frequently made in the latter's work. He speculated

[1] They have been more than once translated into English. The most complete rendering, with notes and explanations, is by the late Dr. J. Legge in *SBE*, vols. xxxix. and xl., where also will be found an account from native Chinese sources of his life and writings, vol. xxxix., pp. 9 ff., 36 ff. Cp. L. Giles, *Musings of a Chinese Mystic*, London, 1906; H. A. Giles, *History of Chinese Literature*, 1901, pp. 60–68.

on the origin of all things, the relation of soul and body, free-will and the future life; and was credited during his lifetime with miraculous powers.[1] The later treatises are for the most part of a more popular character, less transcendently speculative and removed from ordinary life; and they usually show traces of Buddhist thought and the appropriation of Buddhist forms of teaching. A brief work of this nature enforcing the duty of right living and of man's spiritual responsibility is translated by Dr. Legge under the title of 'Actions and their Retributions.'[2] The book is ascribed to the eleventh century of our era, but the author is unknown.[3] In the appendices to the same volume of the *Sacred Books of the East* will be found four other brief Taoist treatises, with references to further literature.

Doctrine of the Tao

The Tao is literally the 'road' or 'way.' In the transcendental doctrine of Lao-tsze, Tao is the self-existent first cause of all, author and sustainer of all things, creator of heaven and earth, alike the source and the end of all that is. Thus defined the system may be described as a kind of transcendental universalism, in which the Tao is the absolute and all-comprehending principle, the *primum movens* which actuates and gives meaning and life to the whole. Lao-tsze himself makes use of the two expressions Tao and Tien-Tao, the 'way of Heaven,' apparently convertibly, or without drawing any

[1] The Chinese text is translated by L. Giles in the 'Wisdom of the East' Series under the title *Taoist Teachings from the Book of Lieh Tzu*, London, 1912.

[2] *SBE*, xl. pp. 235–246.

[3] *ib.*, xxxix. p. 38 ff.

clear distinction between them. Tao however is antecedent to Tien, 'Heaven,' and is itself the unoriginated, unconditioned source and principle of being, whence heaven and all things are derived.

In the later Taoist writings and doctrine Tao becomes definitely the right way, and its significance is developed in a practical and ethical sense. The order of priority also of Tien and Tao is reversed; Tien is conceived as the primary and impersonal cause, the Tao is the ideal personification, as it were, of the moral order of the universe, and the 'way of Heaven' is the supremely right way which Heaven embodies and exhibits as a pattern to men. The Tao is the manifestation of justice, benevolence, purity, of which Heaven is the absolute and eternal type, and is sometimes represented as equivalent to 'virtue,' or moral virtue. It is rather the underlying principle of morality, the 'idea' of virtue, the pattern after which all virtuous conduct must be modelled, the universal and all-pervading rule of right and ideal standard of goodness and truth. To be united with the Tao should be the highest human endeavour, as it is the greatest human happiness. Man's duty is to order his own life in every point in complete harmony with the principles and dictates of the Tao.

Thus Taoism develops into a system of moral teaching based upon high ideals. It remained however mystical and transcendental, and it may be doubted whether in the form of an abstract ethical system it was ever calculated to exercise a powerful influence in the State or over the minds of men. In course of time moreover, but under circumstances which are entirely obscure, the Taoist doctrine allied itself with an ancient

Dualistic Principle: Yang and Yin

cosmological dualism, the fundamental conception of which found expression in the theory of the two rival or contrasted principles which animated and pervaded all nature. These were known as the *Yang* and *Yin*, the two souls of the universe, representing the contrast of male and female, light and darkness, heat and cold, life and death. The symbol of the *Yang* is an undivided line (———), of the *Yin* a broken or divided line (— —). The mysterious combinations of these lines and their significance are set forth in the *Yih*,[1] which therefore is to Taoists as well as to the followers of Confucius a recognised and authoritative Classic. Thus the four primary combinations in pairs, the 'great' Yang and Yin, and the 'little' Yang and Yin, denote the heavenly bodies or the seasons; the triads or combinations of three lines, whole or broken, the elements, or the forces and influences at work in the universe, and so forth.[2] The combinations of the lines are known as *kwa*, and their meaning and significance are expounded in verses which often present great difficulties of interpretation. The whole combines into a curious system of magic and divination, of childish speculation and belief in the occult influence of the spirits, which in practice has taken possession of the Taoist creed and name, and has become to the ordinary Taoist believer the beginning and the end of his faith.

In the interchange and mutual influence of the Yang and Yin the Tao is manifested, the universal

[1] *supra*, p. 626 ff.

[2] The primary combinations are: ⚌, great Yang, the sun, heat, the summer season; ⚎, great Yin, the moon, cold, winter; ⚏, little Yang, the constellations, spring; ⚍, little Yin, the planets, autumn. Cp. J. J. M. de Groot in De la Saussaye's *Lehrbuch* [3], vol. i. p. 93 ff.

and unalterable order which was before all things and from which all things proceed. The abstract monistic theory of the Tao therefore becomes in practice a dualistic doctrine of light and darkness, good and evil, in which the balance perpetually inclines to the side of darkness and fear and hurt. The dualistic doctrine itself also remains to a large extent theoretical; and out of it is constituted a real polytheism or polydemonism, the Yang developing into or revealing itself in the form of the *shen*, the deities who in countless numbers people the earth, the air, and the seas; while the Yin is similarly to be recognised in the demons, the *kwei*, who are equally numerous and omnipresent, and in their malignant nature and power to do injury are more widely feared and propitiated than the shen are reverenced or worshipped.

Moral Teaching

The idealistic philosophical doctrine of the Tao, as set forth in the works of Lao-tsze and his disciples, was originally entirely independent of the lower natural or animistic doctrine and practice, which recognised the conflict of good and evil in the universe, and animated the various objects of nature with their respective spirits of benevolence or ill-will. The moral code therefore of the Taoist books and teaching is lofty and disinterested, but its mystical and metaphysical character places it beyond the reach, perhaps beyond the comprehension of the ordinary professed adherent of Taoism, who is wholly dominated by his belief in the evil spirits, and the efficacy of charms, spells, and adjurations to counteract their baneful influence. The highest life is that which is in harmony with the Tao. Man therefore should endeavour so to live. In imitation of the Tao he will find tranquillity and rest, and will

realise the highest purposes of his being. To this end various practical means were suggested or enjoined, as asceticism, modulation and restraint of the breath, etc. It is probable that these and practices of a similar nature were introduced under the influence of Buddhist example and teaching. The earliest Taoist doctrine lays stress rather upon the cultivation of the virtues, among which humility, self-abnegation, and consideration for others hold an important place. The soul of man, being an emanation from the Tao, is in its own proper nature rightly disposed, and must seek reunion with the Tao, its source, as its highest good. The four principal or cardinal virtues are benevolence, righteousness, the due performance of religious duties or rites, and wisdom. In the practice of these the devout follower of the Tao will reach his goal, and will become again one in experience and life with the Tao from which he derived his birth and being.

The doctrine of the natural goodness of the human soul is common to the systems of Confucius and Lao-tsze. In Taoism, however, the doctrine is made the basis of a genuinely altruistic teaching which urges a man to seek the perfection of his natural being in self-distrust, humility, and the service of his fellow men. The 'perfect man' of Confucianism is perfect for himself alone; and cherishes a confident feeling of superiority to others, whom by virtue of his attainments and learning he is entitled to regard with disdain and contempt. This latter system has fostered a type of character which is arrogant and dominating. The higher ethics of Taoism are practically inoperative in modern China, in presence of the overwhelming

Contrast with Confucianism

authority and prestige of its rival on the one hand, and on the other the lowering and degrading effect of association with superstitious beliefs and practices. There can be no doubt however that in theory Taoism is possessed of the nobler ideal, and commends a type of virtue which is more productive of good to the individual and to the race.

Monasticism

From a very early date monastic institutions have occupied an important place in the Taoist system of belief and practice. In the form of a temporary or permanent withdrawal from the world they probably antedate the introduction of Buddhism into China. In the life of the recluse with its freedom from worldly care and opportunities for meditation and communion with the unseen was found a ready means of securing the highest end of human desire, union with the Tao; and this aspiration again, this perpetual craving for assimilation to the Tao, reacted in experience upon the desire to escape from the distractions and entanglements of the world, and to seek solitude and rest in which to pursue without interruption the great end in view. The development however of monastic orders and rules took place under Buddhist guidance and in imitation of Buddhist usage. There can be little doubt on the other hand that the teachings of Taoism, and the conceptions with which it more or less familiarised the people, prepared the way for Buddhism. The theoretical doctrines and ethical ideals of the two faiths were in many respects akin; and at one time, about the sixth century, it would appear that a movement took place with the object of uniting the two into one system. In its turn the more systematic and organised constitution of the Indian faith presented a model of rule and practice

which harmonized with Taoist tendencies, and gave to its creed the stability and outward form of which it most stood in need. The organisation of Taoist monastic life is essentially the same as in Buddhist institutions. There is no rivalry or competition between them; and interchange of function and office between the priests of the two communities is far from being unknown or unusual. The Taoist monasteries however have at no time been so numerous or important as those of the Buddhist; and in recent years have in both respects greatly declined. There is a Taoist Pope, who lives in almost complete retirement, and seems to exercise comparatively little influence. The temple festivals are still observed, but little, if any religious significance is attached to them. The national gods also are worshipped, the same that Confucianism recognises, but Taoism adds to them a considerable number of lesser deities, often of a merely local significance and of restricted capacity and power.

Later Taoism Degenerate and Superstitious

In practice therefore Taoism has become a system of idolatry and magic. Its creed is polytheistic or polydemonistic; and its priests are soothsayers, exorcists, sorcerers, and fortune-tellers. The ethical ideals and exhortations of the books are ignored and in most instances probably unknown. The founder himself has been deified, and receives honour next in rank to the great gods. Many also of the early disciples of the faith have been raised to a place in the pantheon. The priests in general are illiterate, without training or ambition, and perform the unelaborate ritual of the temple in a perfunctory manner, without intelligence or interest; nor do they command any real respect from the people. Their aid is sought as diviners,

to secure good fortune in the undertakings and events of daily life, or to afford protection by charms, incantations, and exorcisms from the evil spirits. To the name therefore of a religious system in the higher sense Taoism, in its modern form, can hardly be said to have any claim. It has become a widespread and very miscellaneous system of magic, in which the desire for protection against evil influences, and the fear of offending the spirits of malice and wrong, hold the chief place. Nor does there seem to be any probability of a regeneration, or a return to the better principles of the teaching of the earlier faith and creed.

LITERATURE.—R. K. Douglas, *Confucianism and Taouism*, London, 1906; E. H. Parker, *China and Religion*, London, 1905; H. A. Giles, *Religions of Ancient China*, London, 1905, in series 'Religions Ancient and Modern,' chap. iii.; R. Wilhelm, *Laotse vom Sinn und Leben*, Jena, 1911; and articles in *ERE* and *E. Brit.*[11]

CHAPTER IX

SHINTOISM

LIKE the ancient religious beliefs of China the doctrines and practices of Shintoism are based upon conceptions which are primitive and of almost universal prevalence among peoples in all early conditions of culture and habit. The name itself is of Chinese origin, and is said to mean the 'Divine Way', the corresponding Japanese term being *kami-no-michi*, 'way of the gods.' It suggests comparison therefore with the Tao of China. Beyond the significance however of the title the systems have little or nothing in common. The name was probably introduced from China about the time that Buddhism found its way into Japan, and was applied to the more or less loosely co-ordinated systems of existing beliefs, to distinguish them and their adherents from the new Buddhist faith and propaganda. The main articles of belief however which Shintoism presumes are of much earlier origin, and belong to the common stock of human thoughts and ideas with reference to the unseen, the source or basis of which seems to lie in human nature itself. Later, although anterior perhaps to Buddhism, a considerable contribution to creed and practice appears to have been made from Korea. And this last became the distinguishing feature of Shintoism, which remains to the present day, and in which consists perhaps its only claim to independent treatment as a distinct and national form of religious faith.

Fundamental Principles

The two fundamental principles in which the primitive Shinto faith had its origin are spirit or nature worship, and reverence for ancestors. In both these respects its thoughts were closely akin to those of the great nation across the western sea. The former element differed little from that familiar to the traditional beliefs of primitive peoples of all ages; a personification of natural forces, a belief in the omnipresence of spirit life, maleficent or otherwise, with its perpetual influence upon human lives, and the accompanying need for propitiation by offerings or in other ways, in order to win security against the evil designs of malicious or wicked supernatural powers. The element of ancestral worship or regard has become so closely interwoven with Japanese thought and life, and forms so powerful a motive in the Japanese character, that it may almost be said to be the controlling force in his private and political or national life. By many authorities however it is denied that this regard for ancestors, as thus developed almost into a national cult, is in its nature religious at all in the strict sense of the term. It is ethical and filial, but not in the same category of obligation or thought as the beliefs and claims which religion implies. It is doubtful whether the distinction would present or recommend itself to the mind of the ordinary worshipper.

Solar Worship

Sun worship, which has always formed a very considerable part of Shinto creed and practice, is believed to have been brought over to Japan at an early date by priests or teachers from Korea. That shrines and a formal ritual in honour of the sun existed from very early times in Korea seems to be

undoubted. And the constant intercourse between the two countries which appears to have existed from at least the beginning of the Christian era would render such an interchange of thought and belief not improbable. If so, in this as in many other respects Korea will have been the teacher of the Island Empire, transmitting arts and knowledge which themselves were either original or received from China. There is however no direct proof that in this respect Japan was her debtor. It may well be the case that a solar cult was developed independently in the two kingdoms, and under similar conditions and in the minds of kindred peoples followed a similar course.

Literature

The literary basis of the Shinto tradition and cult is to be found in the ancient historical and legendary works known as the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*. These recount the early legends and traditions of the country, and reference has in consequence sometimes been made to them under the name of the Shinto Scriptures. They are not however regarded as in any sense inspired, or as constituting an authoritative norm of doctrine or manners.

The *Kojiki* is the older and more valuable work. It was compiled, and the earlier materials put into order, at the beginning of the eighth century. In literary qualities it is inferior to the *Nihongi*, which is a similar composition, written however in the Chinese language, assigned to the year 720 A.D., ten or twelve years later than the Kojiki. The latter work claims to rest upon the memory of a court reciter or poet, who reproduced with fidelity and accuracy all the narratives and traditions which he had received. The Nihongi is also a collection of myths and early legends down to the author's own age, which are at times presented under varying and not always consistent forms. Creation is represented

as the work of the two deities *Izanagi* and *Izanami*, personifications of the male and female principles in nature. They have been supposed to correspond to or to have been suggested by the *Yang* and *Yin* of the Chinese books.[1] These deities however are not primeval, for it is at the bidding of the heavenly gods that they proceed to bring into existence the islands of Japan. Their work is not represented as including the universe, nor is any reference made to the human race in general. From Izanagi and Izanami in miraculous manner other deities again were produced. The sun-goddess and the moon-god were born from the two eyes of Izanagi, when performing purificatory ablutions after his visit to the lower world. The former, the sun-goddess, is the greatest of the Shinto deities, and as an object of worship is undoubtedly far older than the account given of her origin in the legends of the Kojiki. She is known as *Amaterasu*, 'shining' or 'resplendent,' and by other titles; and is the supreme ruler of heaven, from whom the sovereigns of Japan, in an unbroken line, trace their descent.[2]

The oldest and most important work upon the Shinto ritual is the *Yengishiki*, or 'Institutes of Yengi.' It dates from the beginning of the tenth century, and gives a description of the ceremonies and observances in use at that time, together with twenty-seven of the *norito* or prayers recited in the temple worship. The prayers themselves are judged to be in many instances of considerably greater antiquity than the written work in which they have been preserved; and the same is probably true of much of the ritual of which they form a part. But no evidence is available to determine the circumstances or exact period at which they originated.[3]

Shintoism therefore is a combination of primitive nature worship with the cult of ancestors. And its

[1] *supra*, p. 668 ff.; W. G. Aston, *Shinto*, p. 169.

[2] W. G. Aston, *Japanese Literature*, London, 1899, pp. 18 ff., 48 f.; *Shinto*, chap. vi.

[3] *Japanese Literature*, p. 9 f.; *Shinto*, pp. 7 f., 268 ff.

numerous divinities (*kami*) may be assigned without difficulty for the most part to one or other of these two classes. They are spirits of the hills, streams, the personified powers and phenomena of nature, and ancestral deities the myths and legends concerning whom seem to contain more or less confused reminiscences of real individual men, who for their virtues or vices became after death the objects of popular reverence. Of the first-named class the most important was the sun-goddess, whose chief shrines are in the district of Ise, in the south-central part of the main island of Japan; from whom the Emperors of Japan trace their descent. The early narratives and myths have much to tell of her history and relations to mankind. She is represented as watching over mankind for good, providing for their needs, and interposing for their protection from harm. Her emblem is a mirror, which is preserved in a box in the innermost part of the shrine, and is never allowed to be seen. The temples of Ise are important and much-frequented centres of pilgrimage, and are regarded with great reverence. The worship of the sun is probably the most powerful and effective element in Shinto belief.[1]

Union of Religious Elements

The sun-goddess however, although attended by a number of lesser divinities, and possessing attributes of universal power and overlordship, does not exercise a predominant sway over all the other gods. Shintoism does not recognise a supreme deity, to whom all the rest are subordinate. Offerings are presented in the temples, and prayers recited in honour of many deities; but none is exalted to supreme rank, holding absolute

No Supreme Deity

[1] See W. G. Aston, *Shinto*, chap. vii.; and for the Ise temples especially Murray's *Japan*[7], p. 306 ff.

and unique dominion. The cult is therefore polytheistic in the widest sense, and seems never to have made the step, so generally taken, towards the conception of a prime ruler, with uncontrolled prerogative and power.

The chief deities that are usually regarded as in their origin deified human beings are the divinities of good and evil fortune, the god of wisdom or learning, and the ancient and much-feared gods of the cross-roads.[1]

Temples and Offerings

Shinto temples, sometimes dedicated to more than one divinity, are very numerous throughout Japan. These are of simple construction, without elaborate ornamentation; and the deity is represented by an emblem, a sword or a mirror. Models of swords in wood are among the most common offerings at the shrines; and both the mirror and the sword are objects of separate worship. The latter is said to have its origin in the myth of a magical sword formed in the tail of the great serpent, and presented after his victory over the latter by her brother to the sun-goddess. The offerings at the temples usually consist of various kinds of food, fish or fruits, rice, and *sake*; coins also are presented, tools and weapons of different kinds, and precious stones.

Doctrine

The doctrinal position of Shintoism is more easily set forth in negative than in positive terms. There is indeed no system of doctrine, or recognised and definite creed; nor are theological beliefs controverted, but simply apparently unreached and unconsidered. No supreme deity is known, nor is there any approach to monotheism or even henotheism. The rich

[1] W. G. Aston, *op. cit.*, chap. viii.

pantheon consists of numerous divinities who vary in dignity authority and popularity, who each have their own sphere, in which they exercise a more or less independent control, and have influence over the affairs and fortunes of men. Nor does Shintoism seem to have formed any conception of a future life as a sphere of just reward or punishment for the actions of the present. The spirits of the dead pass into another world, which is indistinctly conceived as a region of darkness and gloom, and there receive the presents and offerings of their living descendants, who seek to propitiate them and to win their favour. The existence of moral evil however is recognised in the rites of purification, which form a part of the elaborate Shinto ceremonial. By wrong-doing a man incurs guilt, and must be freed from its stain before he can appear in the presence of the gods in their temples. For the most part therefore the wrong-doing is ritual transgression, violation of ritual laws of impurity; and virtue is the observance of a ritual code, which prescribes the conditions of life and conduct under which the obligations to the gods may be effectively and acceptably discharged. There are not wanting however even in the older mythical narratives traces of an ethical standard which bases itself upon higher principles. As a whole however Shintoism has not evolved any system of ethics, or taught the distinction of right or wrong from a moral point of view.[1]

[1] Dr. Aston quotes from a recent Japanese writer to the same effect:—'Shinto provides no moral code, and relies solely on the promptings of conscience for ethical guidance. If man derives the first principles of his duties from intuition, a schedule of rules and regulations for the direction of everyday conduct becomes not only superfluous but illogical.' *Shinto*, p. 243.

Relation of Shintoism and Buddhism : Later History

Shintoism and Buddhism have continually been in the closest relationship in Japan, and the extent of their mutual indebtedness it is not easy to measure. The latter faith, as the newcomer into the land, of foreign birth and origin, sought to popularise itself by adopting the Shinto deities into its pantheon, and explaining them as *avatāras* of the Buddha. It was thus that in or about the ninth century of our era there took place a practical blending of the two cults and creeds, as in China popular Buddhism had taken over ritual and articles of belief from the indigenous Taoist profession. As a religious and spiritual force however Buddhism always took the lead, and her teachers enforced the principles of their faith with a fervour and conviction that Shintoism never manifested. A reaction against Buddhism, the outcome of patriotic motives and of opposition to the attempt to raise its rival to the position of a national religion, led in the seventeenth century to a far-reaching and powerful movement in favour of Shintoism. The movement had its origin however less in a popular preference for one form of religion rather than another, than in the aspiration for national unity and self-expression which were growing up, and which desired to possess a national faith to correspond to the newly-awakened national life. Shintoism offered a bond of union on the religious side, which no creed of foreign origin could supply, satisfying the idea of national unity and self-sufficiency. The profession of the Shinto faith therefore became, concurrently with the restoration of the monarchy, almost a synonym for patriotism, and the pervert or the adherent of

another religion was a recreant and traitor to his country. In course of time this predominating position of Shintoism was broken down; and by a formal and authoritative proclamation the Shinto Buddhist and Christian faiths were declared to be the three religions of Japan, with equal status and rights. More recently still, in the year 1911, an edict has been issued declaring that Shintoism is not a religion at all; the object of which is said to be to obviate rivalry or comparison between Shintoism on the one hand and Christianity or Buddhism on the other in regard to spiritual teaching and capabilities.

LITERATURE.—The most complete and systematic account of Shintoism is by the late W. G. Aston, *Shinto the Way of the Gods*, London, 1905. See also G. A. Cobbold, *Religion in Japan*, London, 1894, chap. i.; R. Lange in De la Saussaye's *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*[3], vol i. pp. 141–171; M. Revon, *Les Anciens Rituals du Shintō*, in 'Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions,' Oxford, 1908, vol. i. pp. 165–181; and a translation by J. Carey Hall of a brief treatise by a Japanese author on the *Doctrinal Systems of Shinto*, *ibid.*, p. 159 ff.; B. H. Chamberlain, *Things Japanese*[3], London, 1898, *s.v.* Shinto; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*[11], *s.v.*

CHAPTER X

ZOROASTRIANISM

THE ancient sacred religion of Persia has exercised an influence, and aroused an interest, out of all proportion to the present number of its adherents. From its home in ancient Iran it became known to, and profoundly impressed the Greeks; who have left us accounts of its reputed founder and of his doctrines. Herodotus, though he does not mention the name of Zoroaster, describes the customs and modes of worship of the Persians, as known to him, whose priests are the Magi (μάγοι). There can be little doubt that he is describing the Zoroastrian worship of his day.[1] Plutarch[2] states that Zoroaster lived in the Trojan period, and gives a brief sketch of the 'mythology of the magi'; how that they taught that there existed two gods, or rather a god and a demon, the one born from purest light who is the creator of good things, the other from darkness who is the creator of evil. These two, named Horomazes and Areimanius, are in a state of constant warfare with one another. During a first period of three thousand years Horomazes is continually victorious, and holds his opponent in subjection. For a second

Antiquity and Influence

[1] *Hist.*, i. 131–140.

[2] *De Is. et Osir.*, xlvi., xlvii.

and similar period the war is waged on equal terms, and they mutually destroy one another's works. Finally Areimanius is completely vanquished, and men attain to a condition of blessedness, in which they need no food, and their bodies cast no shadow. Strabo also refers to the sacrifices and ritual observances of the Persians, and mentions the perpetual fire of the Magi.[1] And Plato, or the dialogue that passes under his name, recognises Zoroaster, whom he calls the son of Horomazes, as the founder of Magian doctrine.[2] There is a supposed allusion to Zoroastrian customs in Ezek. viii. 16 f.[3] The wise men from the east moreover are μάγοι (Matt. ii. 1, 7, 16); and the same term is applied to Elymas the Jew, in the island of Cyprus (Acts xiii. 6, 8).

Of the origin and early history of the religion thus widely recognised nothing is certainly known. Its birthplace and primitive home were in or near ancient Irân; but a nearer or more exact determination of the locality seems unattainable. Its great antiquity is undoubted. There exists also a close relation between Zoroastrianism and early forms of Brâhmanical faith, as made known to us and taught in the Indian Vedas. But the precise nature of the connection is in dispute. Various titles have been assigned to it, Zoroastrianism from the name of its supposed founder, Mazdaism from the name of its supreme deity, Magism from the title of its priests, or in reference to its modern developments

[1] *Geogr.*, xv. 3.

[2] I. Alcib. 122 A. The dialogue is probably not genuine, but it belongs approximately to the time of Plato, and is by some ascribed to an older contemporary.

[3] 'They put the branch (*zemōrāh*) to their nose.'

Parsīism. Its real beginnings however we are unable to trace.[1]

Relations to Judaism, Christianity and Muhammadanism

The influence of Zoroastrian doctrine and thought on later Rabbinic Judaism was very great, and in the early centuries of our era on Christianity itself, whose Gnostic developments were inspired by teaching derived from Persia. The same is true of pre-Islāmic Arabia and of Muhammad himself, who borrowed many of his doctrines, especially those having reference to death, the resurrection, and the last judgement, perhaps indirectly, from the magi. When Persia was conquered and overrun by the Muhammadan Arabs in the seventh century, of the native population a considerable number migrated to India, to escape persecution and forcible conversion to Islām. There they settled on the west coast, in the neighbourhood of Surat; but later removed to Bombay, where the majority of them are now found, although a few are to be met with in most of the large towns of the peninsula.

Parsīs

Their descendants, the Parsīs of India, have uninterruptedly maintained their own distinctive character and dress, and are amongst the most intelligent of the population and the most receptive of Western learning and

[1] For the references to Zoroaster in Greek and Latin authors see Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 6 ff., and App. v., where the original passages are quoted in full. In the following Appendix (vi.) there are collected a number of more or less definite allusions to Zoroaster from the literatures of the East, including the Armenian, Syriac, etc., and a quotation also from an Icelandic saga, which identifies Zoroaster with one of the builders of the tower of Babel. Cp. also K. F. Geldner in *Encycl. Brit.*[11], vol. xxviii. p. 1040.

influences. They occupy, for the most part, the positions of wealthy merchants, agents, and bankers, and are well known for their generosity and benevolence, especially towards those of their own faith. It is said that no Parsī has ever suffered from want, or been reduced to beggary. According to the most recent census their total number is almost exactly a hundred thousand.[1] In Persia also there exists a small minority, not exceeding seven or eight thousand, who still cling tenaciously to their ancient creed. They are principally confined to the towns of Yezd and Kirmān, where they are oppressed and made to suffer under all manner of disabilities by their dominant Musalmān neighbours; and are reported to be dwindling numerically year by year.

Of Zoroaster, the reputed founder but more probably reformer of the Magian faith, little is really known, or can with certainty be affirmed. Legend and fable have been busy with his name and life to a more than ordinary degree. His very existence has been questioned. And if that denial may be set aside as an extreme of incredulity, there yet remains little with regard to his circumstances, work, or time that can be positively asserted to be beyond the reach of doubt. The name itself is a Greek corruption of the old Persian Zarathushtra, which became in the later language Zardusht, under which form it appears in the comparatively modern books of the Parsīs. Zarathushtra is apparently not a proper name, but a title like 'high-priest' of the Jews; and a similar meaning has been ascribed

Zoroaster

[1] The Indian census of 1911. There has been a natural increase during the decade, but no accessions from without, which the Parsīs do not endeavour to secure. The proportion to the population is under 3 *per* 10,000.

to it. The real significance of the name is doubtful.[1] In the Avesta, the sacred book of the Zoroastrian faith, details of his life are given; but these are mostly late and untrustworthy. All perhaps that can with certainty be affirmed is that he lived and taught in ancient Irān under a king Vīshtāspa, or Hystaspes. By some authorities this Vīshtāspa has been identified with Hystaspes, father of Darius; and this would fix the date of Zoroaster to about the middle of the fifth century before Christ. This is the belief of the Parsīs themselves, but it seems that on genealogical and other grounds the identification can hardly be correct.[2] Darius and his successors were certainly Zoroastrians, although the name of the prophet and founder of their faith does not occur in the Achaemenian inscriptions. His date must therefore be placed antecedently to their reigns. By the Greeks and Romans a much greater, almost fabulous antiquity was assigned to him. Ancient tradition and speculation have elsewhere made him to be a contemporary of Moses.

[1] Haug in his latest work (*Essays on the Parsīs*, Eng. trans., 3rd ed., p. 296, note) is inclined to give the word a general meaning, such as 'senior, chief (in a spiritual sense)'; others have suggested 'golden' or 'starry splendour,' or 'son of a star.' More recently however it is generally agreed that the second element of the name is related to the Sanskrit *ushtra*, a camel, a word which forms a part of not a few proper names in ancient Iranian. The meaning of the first two syllables of the name is uncertain; and the attempt to assign to the whole a totemistic connotation hardly carries conviction. See for a full discussion and citation of the various conjectures that have been made A. V. W. Jackson, *Zoroaster*, p. 14 and App. i.

[2] 'This identification can only be purchased at the cost of a complete renunciation of the Avestan genealogy.'—K. F. Geldner, in *Encycl. Brit.*[11], vol. xxviii. p. 1041. Cp. also West, *op. cit.*, p. xxxviii. f.

The most accessible and complete narrative of the life of Zoroaster, based upon existing records, is that of A. V. W. Jackson, *Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran*, New York, 1901, where the earlier literature is fully cited. The author's conclusion is that upon the whole a date between the middle of the seventh and sixth centuries before Christ is the most probable period of the life and activity of the prophet, and may be provisionally accepted; see p. 3 f., and esp. App. ii., where the *data* are discussed. Dr. Geldner, *loc. cit.*, does not commit himself to a definite judgement, but inclines to an earlier date. See also E. W. West in *SBE*, xlvii., Introd. p. xxvii. ff., xxxviii. ff., who suggests that the extravagant dates recorded by the classical writers are due to a misunderstanding of traditions regarding the spiritual birth of Zoroaster, or the formation of his spiritual body, traditionally placed in the seventh millennium B.C. He is said to have been thirty years old at the time when the first revelation from heaven was made to him, and to have lived to the age of seventy-seven. The vision took place in Ādarbaijān, and transported to the presence of Aūharmazd himself he received instruction from him in the doctrine. The manner of his death is unknown. The traditional chronology reckons from this 'coming of the religion.'

Vīshtāspa

As the royal patron of Zoroaster and promoter of his cause, king Vīshtāspa occupies a somewhat similar relation to Zoroastrianism as is held by Aśoka towards Buddhism, or Constantine to Christianity. The real history however of his life and reign is obscure and involved in legendary details and extravagances. He is said to have ascended the throne in the year of Zoroaster's birth, and to have ruled for 120 years. The last date has reference probably to the dynasty to which he belonged. His capital city was Balkh, in the northern part of modern Afghanistan. Other accounts however make him the ruler of countries farther west, Media and parts of modern Persia. Thither, after a period of wandering which carried him according to one tradition as far as India and China, the prophet came, and in the twelfth year of his ministry won Vīshtāspa over to the truth. The king, it is said, waged sacred wars with varying success on behalf of the faith, but finally issued victorious from all his conflicts, and the religion which he thus vindicated was established in all countries far and near.

Tradition tells of two important periods during which the Zoroastrian religion exceedingly flourished, periods closed in each instance by a great disaster, when the adherents of the faith were dispersed and slain. The first overthrow was in the time of Alexander the Great, when that monarch invaded Persia, and burned its capital Persepolis. Many of the priests were put to death, the fire-temples rased to the ground, and their ritual and worship made to cease. Of the two authoritative copies of the sacred scriptures preserved at Persepolis, written—so it was said—on cowhides with ink of gold, the one was by the orders of Alexander destroyed, and the second was conveyed to Greece, in order that it might be translated into the Greek tongue. Under the Sasanian kings, in the early centuries of our era, Zoroastrianism revived. The rulers of this dynasty adopted the rôle of patrons of the magi or priests; and devoted their attention to the endeavour to collect together, and as far as possible restore the books of the sacred literature, which had been scattered and to a great extent lost. The attempt was only partially successful, as the fragmentary and interpolated character of the works that have come down to us bear witness. Then came the irruption of the Muhammadans, the second catastrophe, sweeping away for the time being all culture, civilisation, and art; and driving forth into exile those who refused to submit to the yoke of Islām. It is only, comparatively speaking, in modern times that a revived interest has borne fruit in successful research into the history, development, and extant literature of the ancient religion of Persia, now professed in a somewhat modified form, and containing

Eras of Zoroastrian Ascendancy

elements borrowed from surrounding faiths, by the Parsīs of modern India.

The Avesta and Ancient Vedic Worship

That in some of its distinctive features at least the religious system and faith known as Zoroastrianism is older than Zoroaster himself may be inferred from the existing records of his life, as well as from parallels to and contrasts with the ancient Vedic worship. It can hardly be an accident that the *devas*, the bright gods of the Rigveda, have their name and title in the Avesta, *daevas*, degraded to denote the evil and malicious spirits that are in opposition to the Supreme. The unique position which the Avestan texts assume with regard to the significance of this word seems the more remarkable, since apparently in all languages in which the word or its cognates are found it connotes purity excellence and power, not the reverse. The evidence would suggest that Zoroaster took up the rôle of a protestant and reformer, endeavouring to purify an already established faith and cult from degrading elements, and to guide it in a monotheistic direction, based on the conception of a supreme Lord, the lover of justice and truth.

Fire-Altars

The reverence for the sacred fire also, of which frequent mention is made in the Avesta, would seem to antedate the age of Zoroaster, and to be a characteristic of a very early Iranian cult, which the prophet accepted and perpetuated, endeavouring to turn it to higher purposes, and to give to a crude worship a symbolical and lofty significance. According to Arabic writers there were ten chief *pyraea*, or places of fire-worship, before the time of Zoroaster, and others existed in various parts of the known

world. Later the number was reduced to three, which were assigned each to one of the great social orders or classes into which the population was divided. In these divisions many authorities have traced a relation to the ancient Hindu classification of Brāhmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaiśyas, priests warriors and merchants.[1]

The names and locality of the three were as follows :—

(1) Fire of the Priests, *Ātūr Farnbag*, originally in Khorassan or on the eastern shore of the Caspian ; afterwards transferred to Kābul.

(2) Fire of the Warriors, *Ātūr Gūshnasp*, near lake Urumiah.

(3) Fire of the Labourers, *Ātūr Būrzhin Mitro*, on Mt. Raêvant, in Khorassan.[2]

The ruins of such fire-mounds or *pyraea* are frequently met with in Persia. A renewed interest has been given to the discussion of the antiquity and relations of the ancient Vedic and Iranian faiths by the discovery by Dr. Winckler at Boghaz-köi, the ancient Hittite capital, of a copy of a treaty between a Hittite ruler and a king of Mitanni or Northern Mesopotamia, to which is assigned a date *circa* 1400 B.C. Amongst others the names of five well-known Vedic deities are found in the treaty, whose authority is invoked to give to it permanent validity and force. These are Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, and the Nāsatyas, or twin Aśvins.[3] The inference drawn is that the Vedic gods and worship were known in the plain of Mesopotamia at least as early as the middle or end of the fifteenth century before our era ; and the relations between the

[1] *supra*, p. 308.

[2] Cp. *SBE*, v. p. 63.

[3] *supra*, pp. 209 ff., 204.

ancestors of the Indian peoples and the West were sufficiently intimate to admit of the adoption of the deities, and inferentially the ritual of the Rigveda by the nations of Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. The interpretation of the evidence is not undisputed, and it is clearly possible to attach too great importance to the isolated occurrence of a few names.[1]

The history of the recovery by European scholarship of a knowledge of the Parsī Scriptures, the Zoroastrian Bible, reads like a romance. More than a century and a half ago, in the year 1754 A.D., a young Frenchman, Anquetil Duperron, was shown a few pages copied from a sacred book of the Parsīs, which no one in Europe was able to read. He at once conceived the idea and purpose of himself visiting the East, there studying these sacred works under the guidance of the Parsī priests, and returning home, having secured, as he hoped to do, a complete copy for translation into French. In order to reach India and carry out his intention, he enlisted as a private soldier in the service of the French East India Company, and was exposed to much hardship and suffering on his way to the East. No other means however of accomplishing the journey were open to him. On his arrival in India, the authorities of the Company, recognising his genius and the greatness and importance of the object he had at heart, set him free from all obligation towards themselves. And Duperron was able

Parsī Scriptures

[1] Dr. Winckler's discoveries were made in the year 1907, and a summary account of the results appeared in No. 35 of the *Mittheilungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft*. See the question discussed by H. G. Jacobi in *JRAS*, 1909, p. 721 ff., H. Oldenberg and others, *ib.*, p. 1095 ff., and 1910, p. 456 ff.

to spend several years in Surat and Bombay, learning the language from his Parsī teachers, obtaining manuscripts, and by study of the people and their customs preparing himself for his task. In 1761 he returned to Europe, and ten years later published in two vols. 4to his 'Zend-Avesta, the work of Zoroaster, containing the theological, physical, and moral ideas of this law-giver . . . translated into French from the Zend original, with Notes and several Treatises for illustrating the matters contained in it.'

The work, together with the theories and principles on which it was founded, was received in some quarters, notably by Sir William Jones at Oxford, with distrust and opposition. There can be no doubt that the translation, as was inevitable with a first attempt, was in many respects faulty and incomplete. But the principles adopted, and the main results achieved, have stood the searching tests which scholars have applied. It was at once pointed out that the language in which these books were written was closely allied to Sanskrit, and that their mythology agreed in large part with the mythology of ancient India. The rock inscriptions of Persepolis and Behistūn were deciphered, and shown to be written in a dialect cognate to that of the books. And the labours of Anquetil Duperron were thus proved to rest on a sure basis.

To France therefore belongs the credit of giving to the world the first translation of a sacred literature in interest and importance hardly inferior to any. There can be no doubt however that the surviving Avesta literature is but a small part of that which originally existed. Much has been lost, especially in the Greek and Muhammadan invasions at the close of the fourth century B.C., and nearly a thousand

years later in the middle of the seventh century of our era. Alexander the Great is said to have carried off from Persepolis a copy of the Persian Scriptures written in letters of gold; and the destructive zeal and fanaticism of the Arabs completed the ruin of the larger portion of a literature, the immense value of which they were unable either to appreciate or to understand. The marvel is rather that so much has survived the storms of time. The original date and circumstances of composition of that which remains are unknown. Variations of style and language justify the inference that a considerable interval of time separates the earlier and the later portions of the writings. Their essentially liturgical character moreover suggests that they are to be ascribed rather to the continuous traditions of a priestly school than to definite single authorship. There is no positive evidence of date. On the other hand there is nothing either in style of language or in contents which forbids the carrying back of the more ancient parts to the time of Zoroaster himself, according to the universal belief and tradition of the Zoroastrians themselves.[1]

Sacred Literature

The Zend-Avesta then—to give the work its usual title—is all that remains of a sacred literature which must at one time have been of very considerable extent; the composition of which extended, like that of the Hebrew Old Testament or the Indian Vedas, over many years and probably

[1] The original text of the Avesta has been issued more than once within the last fifty years; the latest and best edition is that of K. F. Geldner, published at Stuttgart, 1886–1894. A complete translation is contained in the *Sacred Books of the East*, vols. iv., xxiii., and xxxi., by the late Professor Darmesteter and Dr. Mills.

centuries. No other work is extant written in the Avesta language. The precise meaning of the term itself is not beyond dispute. By most authorities it is considered to be equivalent to the Sanskrit 'Veda,' and therefore to signify 'knowledge'; Darmesteter however would give to it rather the meaning of 'prescription,' 'law.'[1] The name Zend-Avesta is based on a misconception, the expression used in the work itself being Avesta and Zend, *Avistāk va Zand*, or text and interpretation or commentary; the term Avesta being employed to denote the sacred text, Zand the explanatory notes or running commentary, in a different and later form of the language, interwoven with the text, or compiled into separate treatises. This language is *Pahlavī*, the language of Persia under the Sasanian Dynasty; in which a rich store of illustrative and exegetical material concerning the Avesta, its history and contents, has been preserved.

The Avesta proper, as now extant, consists of four distinct parts of unequal value and different date. With these may be compared the four divisions of the Indian Veda,[2] and the similarly subordinate position which the last class occupied with regard to acceptance and use by the orthodox priesthood, and in large part also its later origin.

Yasna

1. The *Yasna*, a collection of hymns or litanies in seventy-two chapters, intended for use at the sacred Yasna ceremony, when they were to be recited at the sacrifice. Portions of this work, as extant, are written in an archaic form of the language, and are the only parts of the

[1] Old Persian *ābastā*, 'the law' (*SBE*, vol. iv.², p. xxxi., note 2).

[2] *supra*, p. 195 ff.

Avesta which claim to have Zoroaster himself for their author.

These are the so-called five *Gāthās*, or songs; short discourses, sometimes in the form of question and answer, on philosophical and metaphysical subjects, written in metre and intended for chanting by the priests. They bear a complete and close analogy to the Sanskrit hymns of the Rigveda. The order and arrangement of the texts is determined by the metre. The following are the titles given to them :—

Gāthās

(1) *Gāthā Ahunavaiti*, chaps. xxviii.–xxxiv. of the Yasna, containing prayers and teaching of Zarathushtra, together with a few sayings composed probably by some of his immediate disciples.

(2) *Gāthā Ushtavaiti*, chaps. xliii.–xlvi., further sayings of Zarathushtra, often with little apparent connection or order, announcing his commission, and proclaiming his doctrines to the assembled peoples.

(3) *Gāthā Spentāmainyu*, chaps. xlvii.–l., a collection of verses, many of them by disciples of the prophet, setting forth the excellence and majesty of the supreme god, Ahura.

(4) *Gāthā Vohūkshathrem*, chap. li., a single chapter containing instruction, delivered perhaps publicly in the congregation, on the nature and claims of the same deity.

(5) *Gāthā Vahishōishti*, chap. liii., of a similar character, probably somewhat later than the two preceding.

The remaining parts of the Yasna are to be ascribed to a period not so early as the age of Zarathushtra. An exception should probably be made of the so-called *Yasna Haptanhaiti*, or Yasna of the seven chapters, *viz.* xxxv.–xlii., which seems

to be not far removed in point of age from the Gāthās, but marks a certain advance in religious ideas, and introduces new conceptions and new names. The contents are simple prayers, written in prose, and addressed to Ahura Mazda, to the fire, or to angels and other good beings, and make no claim to be the actual composition of Zoroaster himself.

Chaps. liv.–lxxii., that follow the Gāthās, are sometimes described as the 'Later Yasna.' They consist of invocations to various deities, for the most part of later date. The more interesting and important are the Sraosha Yasht (lvii.), the prayer to the fire deity (lxii.), and the liturgy of the spirits of the water (lxiii.–lxix.).

Visparad

2. The *Visparad*, a similar but inferior collection of liturgical pieces, twenty-three in number, not independent of the earlier Yasna. The title signifies 'all the leaders' or 'chiefs' (*vispe ratavo*), *i.e.* the high-priests of the Zoroastrian faith, to whom the first part of the Visparad is dedicated.

Vendīdād

3. The *Vendīdād*, the 'priest's code' of the Avesta, consisting of twenty-two chapters or *fargards*, wherein are set forth religious precepts, ceremonial and moral laws, incumbent upon all the followers of the 'good Lord.' The title is explained to mean literally the 'law against evil spirits' (*vī-daēvō-dātem*); and the work contains a brief introductory cosmology, followed by rules of purification and atonement. Chap. xix. describes the circumstances of the revelation of the law to Zoroaster. In the last three chapters a series of medical prescriptions and rules are laid down. The laws of purity which form the main portion of the Vendīdād seem to be stated without definite order or arrangement, and

are sometimes interrupted by digressions on mythical or other subjects.

Chap. iii. follows upon the cosmological details of the previous chapters, and determines the relations of man to the earth upon which he lives. Chap. iv. contains civil and penal regulations of various kinds. Chaps. v.–xii. treat of defilement caused by the dead. Chaps. xiii.–xv. define the function of the dog in religious ceremony. Chaps. xvi.–xviii. enumerate various kinds of uncleanness with the corresponding rules and precautions.

All these instructions and communications are put into the mouth of Ahura Mazda, who imparts knowledge to Zarathushtra in answer to his inquiries.

No certain knowledge is available with regard to the date of the work. The various chapters seem to have been composed at different periods, and by different authors; and some parts are of a considerable age. The whole is not improbably due, as Haug suggests, to successive generations of high-priests, who added to or modified the code by which they were guided in their ministrations.

These three, the Yasna, Visparad, and Vendīdād, form the most sacred portion of the Avesta; and may be recited only by the priests. The metrical Gāthās are the oldest, as can be inferred not only from their contents but from their dialect. The whole, however, is usually considered by the Parsīs to be the work of Zoroaster himself.

A secondary work, supplementary to the Yasna and in part included in it, is the collection of twenty-one *Yashts*, or 'songs of praise.' These consist of hymns in praise of the angels, invoking their guidance and help; and contain also mythical story and legend. Their date is uncertain. Some however are of considerable antiquity, and manifest a simplicity and religious

Yashts

spirit which has caused them to be held in high esteem. Twenty-four such hymns of praise are given in the translation of Prof. Darmesteter. Originally however according to the tradition there were thirty, one for the patron deity of each of the thirty days of the month.

Khordah Avesta

4. The last in order, of inferior authority and sanctity, is the *Khordah Avesta*, or 'little Avesta,' which is recited alike by priests and laymen. Although regarded as inferior to the earlier Avesta, parts of it are in more habitual use, some of the short prayers of which it consists being repeated daily by every orthodox Parsī. Its popularity may be compared to that of parts of the Atharvaveda. The Khordah Avesta is the latest in date, and the most modern in spirit, of the sacred Zoroastrian literature.

Original Form of Avesta

In a later Parsī work, the *Dīnkard*, probably composed about the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century, a tradition is preserved with regard to the original contents of the Avesta. According to its statements, the Avesta in its earliest form consisted of twenty-one treatises, or *Nasks*, of which a complete synopsis is given. Each Nask contained, besides the actual sacred text, a portion of Zand, or commentary. The list of subjects includes moral religious and social law, mythology, metaphysics, the future life, and physical science; and they fall into three groups, theological legal and mixed, each group consisting of seven Nasks. The history also is recorded of the collection and editing of the sacred books under the Sasanian kings. Of these Nasks only the nineteenth, the Vendīdād, is extant in its entirety. It appears probable, however, that much, if not all

of the existing Avesta was entered in the Nasks under different titles, which do not admit of identification. The inference again is clear that the texts preserved to us are only remnants of a much more considerable literature, which was once in circulation but has been lost.

Pahlavī Language and Literature

The Dīnkard is itself part of a very considerable literature, consisting of translations of and commentaries upon the sacred Avesta texts, composed in the fourth and following centuries of our era. The more important works have been translated into English in the *Sacred Books of the East*, vols. v., xviii., xxiv., xxxvii., and xlvii. The last-named volume contains renderings of the fifth and seventh books of the Dīnkard; vol. xxxvii. gives the contents of the Nasks from the eighth and ninth books. The language in which these works are written is known as Pahlavī, the ancient Persian script and tongue of the times of the Sasanian kings, from the fourth to the seventh centuries; there is found in it however a considerable admixture of Semitic words, which seem to have been written, but not pronounced.[1] After the Muhammadan conquest the ancient Persian character was superseded by the Arabic. The same language and writing with the Semitic words eliminated bears the name of Pāzand, the probable meaning of which is 're-explanation.' The Dīnkard itself therefore is a comparatively late work, but there is no reason to doubt that it faithfully reproduces Pahlavī renderings of Avestan texts made several centuries earlier. In particular the traditional accounts of the life-history of Zoroaster are contained in the fifth and seventh books of the Dīnkard; and from these later writers seem to have derived their narratives.

The Nasks

According to the account given in the Dīnkard, the Nasks were divided into three groups of seven each, known as the *gāthā* or song-book, the *dāt* or law-book, and the *hadhamāthra*, 'miscellaneous' or 'mixed.' The first treatise of the first group was known as the *Stōt Nask*, and has been preserved almost entire in the Yasna; the Vendīdād is the nineteenth. These are the only two that are even approximately complete. It is

[1] Cp. in English *viz.*, read and pronounced 'namely.'

however probable that the extant literature comprises parts of other Nasks, the source of which is not recognised. The details of the life of Zoroaster contained in the seventh book are from the Spend Nask. Derived also in all probability from a Pahlavī translation of the same Nask are the narratives and legends concerning the prophet contained in the so-called Selections of *Zād-sparam*, a translation of which is given by Dr. West in *SBE*, vol. xlvii., 'Marvels of Zoroastrianism.'[1]

Order of Composition

The most ancient portion of the Avesta consists of the Gāthās, together with certain other passages and formulae in the Yasna, including the Yasna Haptanhaiti. These last are written in the older form of the language, and are little if at all inferior in point of date to the Gāthās themselves. Later in time of composition are the remaining metrical portions of the Yasna, the Yashts, and parts of the Vendīdād and Visparad. Most recent are those chapters of the Avesta which are written in prose.[2]

[1] Cp. esp. Dr. West's Introductions to *SBE* vols. xxxvii. and xliii.

[2] The most able and brilliant French scholar, Professor James Darmesteter, endeavoured to establish an entirely different order of development, historical and chronological, within the Avesta. According to his view, the Gāthās were really the latest portion of the Avestan literature, and 'represent the latest growth of the Zoroastrian spirit.' They are to be ascribed to the first century of our era, or possibly a hundred years earlier. At the same time Professor Darmesteter admitted that their dialect is an older form of the language than is found in the rest of the Avesta. 'If the Gāthās were written in the first century of our era, it follows that they must have been written in a dead language.' There has further been somewhat extensive borrowing on the part of the authors of the Avesta from later Judaism, and from Greek philosophy, especially Neo-Platonism. The unanimous judgement however of antiquity was that the borrowing had been in an opposite sense, and from the other direction. That verdict is not lightly to be set aside. The wide learning and sympathies of the late

In the Gāthās therefore, if in any literary source, is to be found the original teaching of Zoroaster himself. That teaching became in subsequent times corrupted, modified, and supplemented from many different sides and by many minds. It is often asserted that Zoroaster expounded a system of pure Dualism, the eternal and independent existence of two great principles of good and evil; that accordingly his is the one great and influential faith which has stopped short of the doctrine of a unique and paramount source of all. Such was undoubtedly the theory of later Zoroastrianism; which ascribed to its founder the simple and undisguised dualistic doctrines which were currently accepted in its own day. Such also was the belief of the Greeks themselves concerning the philosophy and system formulated by him. They were certainly however mistaken. Apart altogether from the inherent improbability that a thinker, acute and penetrating as Zoroaster must have been, could have rested content with a double cause of all, and made no attempt to explain or to get behind these two principles to an antecedent source and originator of both, there are passages in the Gāthās themselves which appear distinctly to assert the opposite view. And although there are other passages which *primâ facie* at least bear a dualistic interpretation, it is reasonable to explain these as giving the popular and superficial impression, while the real mind of the philosopher expressed

Teaching of Zoroaster: Dualism

professor demand a respectful consideration for any views that he advocates; but in this instance he has failed to convince students of Zoroastrian belief and history. Cp. *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iv.², Introduction; *Le Zend-Avesta*, trad. par J. J. Darmesteter, 3 vols., Paris, 1892–93.

itself in language inspired by deeper and truer thought. Phrases and language are employed in the Gāthās which show unmistakeably that the prophet in truth regarded the spirit of evil as subservient to a supreme being, the good creator and lord of all. For example :—

> Therefore as the first did I conceive of Thee, O Ahura Mazda ! as the one to be adored with the mind in the creation, as the Father of the Good Mind within us, when I beheld Thee with my eyes as the veritable maker of our Righteousness, as the Lord of the actions of life. *Yasna* xxxi. 8.
>
> Where are Thine offerers, O Mazda ! Thy helpers, who as the enlightened of the Good Mind are producing the doctrines with wide mental light as inherited treasures, in misfortune and in woe ? I know none other than You ; then do Ye save us through Your righteousness. *Ib.* xxxiv. 7.
>
> So I conceived of Thee as bountiful, O Great Giver, Mazda ! when I beheld Thee as supreme in the generation of life ; when, as rewarding deeds and words, Thou didst establish evil for the evil, and happy blessings for the good, by Thy virtue, in the creation's final change. *Ib.* xliii. 5.
>
> He who gives to this (good citizen) that which is better than the good ; yea, He who bestows on him in accordance with his religious choice is Ahura Mazda. And this will He bestow through His divine Authority, while on the withholder of the sacrifice He will send worse than the evil, in the last turning of the creation in its course.
>
> So grant me also, O Thou most bountiful Spirit Mazda, Thou who has made both the Kine and the waters and the plants, both Immortality and Welfare, those two eternal powers, and through Thy Good Mind in the doctrine. *Ib.* li. 6, 7.[1]

Neither is later Zoroastrianism dualistic in the strict sense of teaching the existence of two equal independent powers of good and evil, alike eternal and omniscient, of equivalent authority, dignity,

[1] Quoted from Dr. Mills' translation in *SBE*, vol. xxxi. Cp. also Yasna xxx. 8 ; xxxi. 19, 21 ; xlv. 3–7 ; xlvii. 1, 2 ; xlviii. 4 ; xlix. 1, 12 ; li. 1.

and rights. The lord of evil, though he possesses the power of creating evil and evil beings, is strictly limited in his capacity, and is neither omnipresent nor all-knowing.[1] The comparison has often been made between *Ahriman*, the Zoroastrian power of darkness, and the devil of the Christian faith. The former however holds a more independent position, possesses more extensive rights, and is endowed with a greater ability to hurt and harm. A further element of likeness is that the religion of Zoroaster also contemplates the coming of a future saviour, who will destroy the evil, and establish the permanent unmixed reign of righteousness.

Later Zoroastrianism not absolutely Dualistic

The good spirit bears the name of *Ahura Mazda*, perhaps meaning the 'great' or 'wise creator.'[2] In Pahlavī the name appears in the form Aûharmazd; and in later Persian was corrupted still further into Ormuzd. He it is who is represented in the Avesta

Ahura Mazda

[1] 'If it be necessary for a dualism that the evil spirit be omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, or eternal, then is the Parsī religion no dualism. The *Bundahish* distinctly asserts that the evil spirit is not omniscient and almighty; that his understanding is backward, so that he was not aware of the existence of Aûharmazd, till he arose from the abyss, and saw the light; that he is unobservant and ignorant of the future, till it is revealed to him by Aûharmazd; that his creatures perish at the resurrection, and he himself becomes impotent, and will not be. Nowhere is he supposed to be in two places at once, and to know what is occurring elsewhere than in his own presence.' E. W. West, in *SBE*, vol. v. p. lxix.

[2] The equivalent Sanskrit form occurs in the Rigveda as an epithet of Rudra, the father of the Maruts (*supra*, pp. 226, 239). He is the great god (*asuro maho RV*, 2. 1. 6) of heaven. Ahura Mazda in character, although not in name, corresponds to Varuṇa of the Vedic writings; and around each

as in colloquy with Zarathushtra, answering the questions put to him by the latter. Ahura Mazda is the lord of the whole universe, creator of all, author and giver of light and life, and of everything that is good. His opponent is *Angro Mainyush*, the 'hurtful spirit,' the malignant author of darkness and death, and of all that is evil. The universe is the theatre of a perpetual conflict between the two spirits, in which men take part according to their natures and desires; this strife will issue in the triumph of the good, and the overthrow and destruction of the evil. Of the precise position occupied by Angro Mainyush in the Gāthās, as a more or less definite personification of evil, it is not quite easy to judge. In the judgement of some he was regarded by Zoroaster himself as merely one of two spirits in subordination to, or perhaps possessed by the supreme deity Ahura Mazda; the other being *Spento Mainyush*, or the good spirit.[1] The contrast or opposition, therefore, is originally rather between the two spirits of Ahura Mazda, than between him and any independent or co-equal power. And the true analogy is to be seen in the condition of man himself, who finds by experience that he is drawn in two directions by the opposite impulses—the spirits—of good and of evil. In these early texts also the figure of Angro Mainyush is much less clearly defined, as it is less commanding and prominent, than that

was grouped the same number of subordinate spirits or attendants. If the Amesha Spentas (*infra*, p. 707) were personifications of the six planets or their supposed attributes, it has been conjectured that Ahura Mazda represented originally the moon.

[1] Cp. Haug, p. 304; the passages quoted from the Yasna are xix. 9, lvii. 2. Of the former of these Dr. Mills denies that it is to be considered as put into the mouth of Ahura Mazda; cp. *SBE*, vol. xxxi. p. 262, note.

of Ahura Mazda. The ambiguity may be due more to the corrupt state of the text, and to difficulties of interpretation, than to any indefiniteness in the teaching of the author. It was only in later developments of the religion that Spento Mainyush became identified with Ahura Mazda; while his opposing or contrary spirit assumed a position of independence and stood forth as engaged in actively counterworking the operations of the supreme deity.

Subordinate Spirits

Besides these that have been named, the older Avesta recognises no other gods. There are however many subordinate spirits or genii, who execute the commands of Ahura Mazda or Angro Mainyush respectively, as their vicegerents over various departments of life and conduct. Of these the chief form a kind of heavenly council or cabinet; and, as their names seem to show, are really abstract moral and ethical conceptions personified. They are six in number, *viz.* *Vohu Mano*, good mind; *Asha Vahishta*, best righteousness; *Khshathra Vairya*, the wished-for kingdom; *Spenta Armaiti*, holy obedience or humility; *Haurvatāt*, health, salvation; *Ameretāt*, immortality. Plutarch was acquainted with this division; and gives the corresponding Greek terms for the first five, εὔνοια, ἀλήθεια, εὐνομία, σοφία, πλοῦτος. The last is ὁ τῶν ἐπὶ τοῖς καλοῖς ἡδέων δημιουργός, evidently a paraphrase for a name perhaps misread or misunderstood.[1] When Ahura Mazda is reckoned with them, the whole constitute the seven *Amesha Spentas*, 'immortal holy ones,' corrupted in later Persian into *Amshaspands*. With Ahura Mazda also worship and sacrifice are offered to the other Amesha Spentas.[2] In addition to,

[1] *De Iside et Osiride*, ch. xlvii.

[2] *Vend.* xix. 3.

and distinct from these was *Sraosha*, 'hearing' or 'obedience,' who personified and taught the divine worship which man was expected to render. To the praise of Sraosha an entire hymn of the Yasna (chap. lvii.) is devoted.

For the evil spirit also a council is provided, but this was probably a later development to correspond with the celestial Amesha Spentas. The names of the members are given as follows:—*Akem Mano*, evil mind; *Indra*; *Sauru*, or *Saurva*; *Naunghaithya*; *Tauru*, or *Taurvi*; *Zairi*.[1] The second and third are the Vedic deities Indra and S'arva or S'iva. The name of the fourth has been compared with Nāśatya, one of the Aśvins of Indian mythology; he is the spirit of disloyalty and discontent. Tauru and Zairi seem to be personifications of disease and of death. These powers of wickedness devise plans together for the hurt and destruction of mankind, as the celestial hierarchy for his preservation and life. The history of the universe declares itself as the history of the conflict between the opposing forces. And man by his every act promotes the kingdom either of the light or of the darkness. The mission of Zoroaster is to instruct men how to avoid the evil and choose the good, and he announces in sure prospect the final and complete victory of righteousness.

Eschatology of the Gāthās

The Gāthās also teach the doctrine of a future life, and of the immortality of the soul. They concern themselves little with ritual and ceremonial questions, of which the later Avesta and Pahlavī works are so full. All the deeds of a man, good and bad, as well as his thoughts and words, are recorded in a book; which is produced, and witnesses for or against him in the judgement after

[1] *Vendīdād*, x. 9, 10; xix. 6.

death. Sentence is then passed in accordance with its testimony. If the good thoughts and deeds predominate, the soul by the help of Ahura Mazda traverses in safety the bridge of *Chinvat*, and enters paradise; if the evil, in the attempt to cross he falls off the bridge into hell.[1] Should the righteous and unrighteous works be evenly balanced, and his character and deserts therefore undetermined, he is dismissed to a kind of intermediate state, there to await the general judgement. This final and universal judgement will be held by *Saoshyās*, the great prophet who is to appear. He will destroy Ahriman, the spirit of evil, and will inaugurate the perfect reign of truth and purity and justice, under the immediate and undisputed rule of Ahura Mazda.

Of Saoshyās himself it is said that he will be a direct descendant of Spitama Zarathushtra, the founder of the true religion. When he comes, he will bring with him a new divine revelation, a twenty-second Nask. The same title also is used in the plural of attendants or forerunners of the great Saviour and Deliverer, who by their virtues help to bring about the final victory of the good. The actual resurrection of the body does not appear to have been an article of faith in the earlier Avesta. Later however, the resurrection of the dead together with the restoration of all things is among the good works of Ahura Mazda.[3]

[1] 'All good thoughts, all good words, all good deeds, will reach Paradise. All evil thoughts, all evil words, all evil deeds, will reach Hell.' Part of a prayer from the Nasks, which is to be recited twice a day, morning and evening. *SBE*, iv.[2] p. 247.

[2] Cp. also art. by E. W. West on Zarathushtra's Doctrine regarding the Soul in *JRAS*, 1899, p. 605 ff.

[3] Cp., for example, Yasht xix. 10 ff.:—'Ahura Mazda made the creatures, many and good . . . so that they may restore the

Doctrinal Developments

The analogy with the Vedic writings extends also to the contents of the later Avesta. These concern themselves almost exclusively with legal and ceremonial matters, and give directions for ritual observances, which in general are carried out by the Parsīs at the present day. A perhaps closer analogy, especially in the minute care with which provision is made for every detail, may be found in the Levitical code of the Old Testament. The Vendīdād is the great storehouse of these regulations. In this book Zarathushtra is represented as questioning Ahura Mazda, and receiving answers on all manner of topics, from the history of creation to laws of uncleanness, penalties for assault, and atonements for sin. New deities moreover, or semi-deities, make their appearance; especially the *fravashis*, 'protectors' or guardian angels, who watch over the interests and wellbeing of every man. His path at each moment of life is beset by countless demons that seek his hurt, and ceaselessly endeavour to compass his destruction. Evil spirits too take possession of the dead the instant life has departed; and can only be expelled by the look of a dog, four-eyed and yellow-eared. In practice almost any dog is permitted to be used. The modern Parsīs bring the animal into the presence of the corpse, and turn its head towards the dead body, to drive out the demon of corruption. This conception of the dog, who, according to another form of the tradition,

world, which will thenceforth never grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at its wish; when the creation will grow deathless, the prosperous creation of the Good Spirit,' etc.

watches at the entrance of the bridge of Chinvat, and by his barking frightens back the souls of evil-doers and prevents them from crossing, is undoubtedly akin to myths of Cerberus, and the dog of Yama, the Hindu lord of the lower world.

The ritual embodied in these books is, in its essence, a ritual of purification. The greater number of the regulations bear upon this subject.

Ritual

The most holy and pure element is the sacred fire, which is maintained perpetually burning in the house of every Zoroastrian or Parsī. Next to the fire in sanctity come earth and water. To defile one of these three by the touch of a dead body, or by anything that is given off or separated from the living body, as the breath, the cuttings of the hair, nail-parings, etc., entails the most severe penalties. To burn a corpse, or to bury it, are alike inexpiable sins. The dead body is exposed in a building specially constructed for the purpose, apart from all human dwellings, called a *Dakhma*, where it is left to be devoured by the vultures. And lest the Dakhma should itself transmit defilement to the earth, it is theoretically at least separated from the ground by a golden thread. These buildings, usually placed on an eminence, are low round stone towers, having a raised stone platform or daīs within, circular and sloping gently towards a pit in the centre of the Dakhma, divided into partitions in which the bodies are laid. In Bombay these places bear the name of Towers of Silence; and the sight is not a little gruesome of the scores of over-fed vultures hovering around. If the community is too poor to be able to erect a separate building, they may lay the dead body on the ground, 'clothed with the light of heaven, and beholding the sun.'[1] The priests

[1] *Vend.* vi. 51.

who tend the everlasting or *Bahrām* fire must wear a veil before their lips, lest their breath should reach the blaze and defile it; to extinguish it is one of the greatest of sins. Digressions and discussions on mythology and medicine, on civil and religious disabilities, together with the penalties awarded to the several classes of crime, occupy the greater part of the remainder of the sacred books.

Fire-Worship

On account of their reverence for the sacred fire the Parsīs have frequently been termed 'fire-worshippers.' As in other instances it is difficult to deny that into the feeling and attitude of some of the less educated members of the community the element of worship may enter, as they approach the sacred flame. The more enlightened of the Parsīs however, who form the large majority of the adherents of Zoroastrianism, deny that any real worship is ever offered, or intended to be offered, to the fire itself. In its purity, and freedom from possibility of defilement, it is the best type and emblem of the Supreme Lord of all; and as such should be regarded with reverence and approached with awe. There can be no doubt that their contention is in harmony with the real teaching and meaning of the sacred books, which move upon a high plane of monotheistic intention and thought. Like all Eastern works however they are full of imagery, which is readily capable of misinterpretation. The charge is certainly unjustified as regards the Parsī belief and profession as a whole.

Ethics

In moral and ethical conceptions and manner of life the Parsīs approach perhaps more nearly to the ideal of the New Testament than any other non-Christian people. Their motto is 'Good thoughts, good words, good deeds'; and as a rule they live according to it. They practise benevolence on a generous scale, and have established in Bombay many charitable institutions. There are two sects among them at the present day, the *Shenshais* and the *Kadmīs*, the former being the most numerous. Between

these however there is no difference in doctrine, but merely in the time of celebrating the annual feasts. The chief festivals are at the New Year, the spring celebration at the vernal equinox, and the midsummer festival in honour of *Mithra* or the sun. Further ceremonies and feasts are held to celebrate the praise of Ahura Mazda or other divinities, or of a holy man deceased. Their adopted language is Gujarātī, though all, or nearly all, speak English. And a knowledge of the sacred tongue of the Avesta, or of the Pahlavī, is confined to the *dastūrs*, the high-priests; of whom however, at least until recently, few were able to do more than read or recite the sacred text with little comprehension of its meaning. Of a grade inferior to the dastūrs are two secondary orders of priests, the *mobāds* and the *herbāds*. The priestly office descends from father to son; but a priest may, if he pleases, lay aside his sacred rank and become a layman. The contrary step, the consecration of a layman to priestly functions, is not held permissible. The ordinary members give to themselves the name of *behādīn*, or 'followers of the best religion.'

In practice the Parsīs are all strict monogamists; and they wear a sacred girdle, the *kōstī*,[1]—a practice which is perhaps connected historically with the sacred thread of the twice-born Indian. It is however put on in an entirely different manner, being wound three times round the waist; and is

[1] Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda:—O Maker of the material world, thou Holy One! what is it that brings in the unseen power of Death?

Ahura Mazda answered:—It is the man that teaches a wrong Religion; it is the man who continues for three springs without wearing the sacred girdle, without chanting the Gāthās, without worshipping the Good Waters. *Vend.* xviii. 8, 9.

composed of seventy-two threads to represent the seventy-two chapters of the Yasna. They further allow the re-marriage of widows, are careful and frequent in their ablutions, and practise elaborate funeral ceremonies with recitation of sacred texts.

Relation to Indian Gods and Faith

The ultimate relation of Zoroastrianism to the religions of India, and more especially to the system of faith and worship set forth in the Rigveda, is one of great interest, upon which the last word has not been said. Some authorities regard the Zoroastrian faith as a revolt against the practices and beliefs of the ancestors of the Brāhmans, which had its origin at a time when the forefathers of the Iranian and Indian families of peoples dwelt together in the highlands of Bactria and Central Asia. If this view is correct the religion of Zoroaster was of the nature of a reform directed against formality and polytheism, against mere outward ceremonial and nature worship. There is much in the internal character of the religion itself which at first sight favours this view. Those who adopt it point to the fact that the ordinary term for an evil spirit in the Avesta is *daeva*, equivalent to *deva*, the Sanskrit name for god. And that, on the other hand, the word *asura*, employed in ordinary Sanskrit only of demoniacal beings who are hostile to the gods, is in the Avestan language, in the form *ahura*, the highest term for the supreme being. In the ancient Rigveda, however, *asura* is found used in a good sense, applied to the gods, and even to the pure and spiritual Varuṇa himself.[1] The significance of the term therefore has become precisely inverted in the usage of the two languages. For what reasons or in what manner

[1] *supra*, p. 217 ff.

this came to pass has never been satisfactorily explained. But the theory that a reformer or reformers set themselves deliberately to alter the meaning of words, in order to accentuate the departure from the old faith, does not appear very probable or one easy to carry out in practice.

Other parallels between the names and functions of the several deities have frequently been discussed. Ahura Mazda has his Indian prototype in Varuna, the wide blue sky. *Mithra* is the sun, the Sanskrit Mitra. *Haoma*, the sacred drink of the worshippers of Ahura Mazda, is the Soma of the Brāhmans. Agni, the Sanskrit goddess of fire, is the Avestan *ātar*; and the office and functions ascribed to each present striking similarities. The names further of three well-known Indian divinities, of whom Indra is the chief, reappear on the council who attend upon Ahriman, the great spirit of evil.[1] Even the name applied in the Avesta to the opponents of the Zoroastrian religion, *daeva-yasna*, 'deva-worshippers,' has been thought to indicate a moral and religious, if not physical conflict with the followers of the Veda. Affinities also of usage and doctrine have been recognised with Buddhism, with Greek philosophy and Neo-Platonism, and with Jewish history and tradition.[2] Even the name of Buddha occurs in the Avesta, although not in the oldest portion,[3] as an opponent of the good religion, and a would-be destroyer of Zarathushtra himself.[4] 'Gaotema the heretic' is mentioned in the Fravardīn Yasht. And the legend of Zarathushtra's temptation by

[1] *supra*, p. 708.

[2] Cp. *supra*, pp. 685 f., 710.

[3] *Vend.* xi. 9; xix. 1.

[4] i. 16.

Angro Mainyush affords a curious parallel to that of the founder of Buddhism by Māra. There are points of likeness in doctrine and cosmology to Philo, and even to the Pentateuch.[1] The conception of Vohu Mano, good thought, the first created being and the chief of the Amesha Spentas, presents a similarity, that can hardly be entirely accidental, to the Λόγος of Philo. Vohu Mano, like the Λόγος, is not only the first creation of Ahura Mazda, but is the instrument of all his other creations. He intercedes for men with the gods, and conveys to the human race a knowledge of their will.

From all this Professor Darmesteter infers the late origin of the Zoroastrian religion, of the Avesta its sacred book, and especially of the Gāthās; thus inverting the usually accepted order of production and date.[2] The unanimous voice of tradition however places the indebtedness on the other side; that Philo and the Greek philosophers derived many of their thoughts and doctrines from Persia, as was undoubtedly the case with later Rabbinic theology and the early heresies of Christendom. Buddhism, on the other hand, reached the country beyond the Indus, and the regions of Iran, soon after, if not as early as the reign of king Aśoka in the third century before Christ. In consideration of the fact therefore that the Avesta is not the work of one man, composed and published within the limits of a lifetime, but a compilation extending probably over several centuries, the references to Buddha are more naturally explained as subsequent interpolations, when the two religions met and came into conflict.

[1] They are discussed *e.g.* by Darmesteter in *SBE*, vol. iv.[2] p. liv. ff.

[2] *supra*, p. 702 f.

Accordingly the question of the relation of Zoroastrianism to the pre-Brāhmanical religion of the Rigveda must be left undetermined, in the hope that future investigation will throw more light upon an obscure and exceedingly interesting subject. It appears most probable that development in both religions followed parallel but, generally speaking, independent lines from a yet more ancient Indo-Iranian cult, which was not entirely isolated from creeds and forms of faith which were developing and extending in the Euphrates valley and the nearer parts of Asia Minor. It is abundantly evident that the ancient peoples of the world were by no means so independent, or wanting in the means of communicating thought and interest, as has often been believed. Under any circumstances however, whatever the degree of relationship or interdependence may be, the Zoroastrian faith had its origin and first beginnings in a far past age, the darkness of which is as yet but dimly illuminated by the light of inference and conjecture. There can be no doubt at least that the religion that bears the name of Zoroaster is amongst the oldest religions of the world.

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CHAPTER XI

MUHAMMADANISM

Contrast with Egyptian and Other Religions

In entering upon the study of Muhammadanism, we enter upon an almost entirely new phase of religious life, unlike any that have hitherto received attention. New circumstances, new environment, new national character, produce novel and altogether interesting results. We seem to pass at once from the dim shadow of antiquity to the broad daylight of our own times. And whereas in dealing with Egypt and Babylon,—to a less extent also in the case of the religions of India and of Zoroastrianism,—it was inevitable that we should content ourselves with inference more or less probable, and conjecture from facts or arguments often disputable, here we are able to stand on the firm ground of record and history. Not that the origin and early growth of Muhammadanism have been left untouched by legend and fable. It is far otherwise. Around the person and character of its founder a wonder-loving people have heaped tales of marvel beyond what has gathered round any other character in history with the exception perhaps of the three great figures of Eastern romance, Solomon, Gautama Buddha, and Alexander the Great. Profoundly different as these three were in their mission and history, Muhammad differed not less from each. And in his case also it is not always easy to sort the true from the false, and to discern the real man

behind the veil which tradition and story have thrown around him. If however the residue of fact accepted and acceptable with regard to the life and conduct of Muhammad himself is not always as abundant as might be wished, there is rarely any doubt as to the main outlines of the narrative, the succession of cause and effect, or the general development of doctrine.

Present-Day Influence

The religions of Babylonia and Egypt moreover, wide as has been their influence, and the ascendancy which the former at least exercised over the outward form no less than the internal development of the beliefs of contemporary peoples, are of an importance to-day which is mainly literary and historical. Islām, on the contrary, is a living and potent force in the modern comity of nations, and within the British Empire in particular claims the right to make its voice heard, a right which its services to truth, beyond any political or social obligations, forbid should be disallowed. Indifference to the faith that reverences Muhammad as its prophet and founder, or disregard of its significance and power, implies a lack of sympathy with the deepest feelings of many millions of citizens of the Empire, and of the broader world outside; and a right knowledge of the history and beliefs of the peoples that profess Islām is the first essential qualification for understanding and furthering the solution of the many problems which inevitably come to the front when Christian and Muslim meet. The present, and in some directions advancing influence of Muhammadanism in British India, in Africa, and elsewhere to-day is a fact which no student of general polity or of social or religious life can afford to neglect or despise.

A contrast then may be legitimately drawn in two particulars at least between the religion established and taught by Muhammad, and the systems prevalent in the lands of Egypt and Babylon. In both these respects Zoroastrianism holds a somewhat middle position, having more community of nature however with Islām than with the other two. Neither in Mesopotamia nor in Egypt does there stand forth any single individual as the organiser and shaper of the national creed and practice. It would seem, as far as our knowledge goes, that these religions grew and formed themselves by the concurrent, perhaps unconscious working of many minds. It is of course entirely otherwise with Muhammadanism. Zoroaster himself can claim only a dim and shadowy personality as compared with the Prophet of Arabia. Islām owes its origin, its life, its form, to the impulse and teaching of one man. It must therefore be ranked among the great religions of the world with Buddhism in the East and Christianity in the West, each of them essentially the creation of a single master-mind and will. By the followers of Muhammad moreover reverence is paid to a sacred book, the teaching and very words of which are believed to have been supernaturally communicated, to whose precepts therefore unquestioning obedience is due. It may be said that something of the nature of a sacred book is found in Egypt, in the so-called Book of the Dead and similar compilations.[1] There is no evidence, however, that these collections of writings were ever looked upon as infallible or inspired; so far from forming a closed 'canon' they appear to have admitted of unlimited addition and expansion, and in their contents and character

[1] *supra*, p. 86 ff.

to have been neither unique nor beyond imitation, —magical formulae, the virtue of which resided in form and sound, making no claim to supply wholesome and reliable instruction. The Parsīs also have their scriptures, which, fragmentary though their condition may be, are regarded as an authoritative rule of life and conduct. But the Qur'ān, in the eyes of Muhammadans, is the most rigidly exclusive book in the world; its sacred text is verbally inspired in the most absolute and dogmatic sense, capable of no defect and admitting of no modification. In this respect therefore Muhammadanism dissociates itself from these two great religious systems of the old world, and in its possession of and dependence upon a sacred book takes its place by the side of the Brāhmanism of India with its Veda, Zoroastrianism with its Avesta, Judaism with its Hebrew Scriptures, and Christianity with her Bible.

Arabia before Muhammad: Local Determining Conditions

Of the early history and circumstances of Arabia before the time of Muhammad not much is known in detail, although the broad features and conditions are sufficiently clear. The habits of a roving tribal life must continually have been enforced for the most part by the character of the land itself. Great cities, like Palmyra, will always have been the exception. Sandy wastes, watercourses dry for a considerable portion of the year, a limited supply of water, the few routes of merchandise and traffic determined by the position and frequency of the wells, are the main conditions which determine now, as they determined in ancient times, the usages and character of the people. Arabia can never have supported a large population, although it is probable that

within historic times the invading wind-driven sand has encroached on the cultivable area. More than in most lands the nature of the country has left its impress upon the inhabitants. And a population, homogeneous on the whole in physical characteristics as in mental traits and the broad scheme of religious belief, and comparatively isolated within the well-marked limits of the peninsula, developed in its own way a life and civilisation all its own. The loftiest region of the peninsula is in the south-west, whence the land falls to the north-east and east, and the low-lying coast lands on three sides are to a large extent rich and fertile, provided with a sufficient water supply. The interior is a tableland, crossed by ranges of hills, and scored by deep-lying wadies, which carry water only in the rare seasons of rain. Of considerable parts of the country little is known. The drifting sand that covers its surface is estimated to be of a depth of from four to six hundred feet.

Early Arabian Kingdoms

In the southern part of the peninsula, and to a less degree in the north, large numbers of inscriptions have been found, for the most part discovered and brought home by the late Edward Glaser, during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. The date of the earliest of these is placed by scholars in the twelfth or thirteenth century before Christ. They belong to two great kingdoms, the Minaean and Sabaean, which alike had their capital cities in the south-western corner of the land.[1] The Minaean rule preceded that of Saba, and on the testimony of the inscriptions

[1] Ma'īn, or Ma'ān: and Saba, or Sheba, שְׁבָא, the modern Mārib, 1 Kings x. 1 ff.; Ezek. xxvii. 22; Isa. lx. 6; Joel iv. 8.

extended its influence far to the north of the peninsula. It apparently flourished for six or seven hundred years, yielding place to Sabaean dominion in or about 700 B.C. E. Glaser however would carry back the era of Minaean civilisation to a considerably earlier period. If this were established, it would lend support to the view held by many scholars that the earliest known Babylonian Dynasty was of Arabian origin. It appears to be certain that from remote times a very considerable intercourse was carried on between Arabia and Mesopotamia. The argument for the derivation of the dynasty of Babylon from Arabia is based mainly upon the forms of the names of the reigning monarchs. If at the beginning of the second millennium before Christ North Arabia was the seat of a powerful kingdom, it is at least not impossible that rulers went forth thence and established their authority on the banks of the Euphrates. The Sabaean kingdom (סְבָאִים, Is. xlv. 14) succeeded in the south, with its capital at Mārib, about the year 700 B.C., and the latest known inscription records the breach of the great dam of the city *circa* 540 A.D. Before this date the larger part of the south or south-west of the peninsula seems to have passed under the rule of the Abyssinian king.

Caravan Routes

Among the influences potent in shaping the life of the early peoples of Arabia must be reckoned the great trade or pilgrim routes, along which there flowed a constant stream of traffic, conveying news of the outer world, and these by providing the means of constant intercourse between the most distant parts of the peninsula, broke down the tendency to isolation, and promoted a general homogeneity of thought and practice among the various tribes.

The two most important highways converged from the north and north-east on Medina as a commercial centre, and thence southwards to the sacred city of Mecca. The last-named road crosses the desert in a south-westerly direction from Baghdad and the plains of Mesopotamia. The northern pilgrim way from Syria and Damascus skirts the western edge of the plateau of the Syrian desert at no great distance from the Jordan valley, and at the head of the Gulf of Akaba is joined from the west by the pilgrim route from Egypt that traverses the base of the Sinaitic peninsula. Thence the united road follows the strip of low-lying coast land on the east of the Red Sea. There can be no doubt that these two routes, and others of less importance, were busy arteries of traffic and intercourse long before the time of Muhammad.

Tribal Conditions

Thus from the earliest times of which we have knowledge the Arabian peninsula has been the home of wandering tribes of Bedawy race, separated often by deadly blood feuds, but for the most part of kindred origin; travelling hither and thither in search of pasturage for their flocks and camels, or on more distant and adventurous journeys along the fixed caravan routes of commerce. Among them there arose from time to time empires on a larger scale, with a definite and more or less permanent centre, as one or another chieftain was able more widely to extend his authority, and to transmit his power to his descendants. In general however these appear to have been possessed of little cohesion, readily falling to pieces before external attack, and incapable of real consolidation or aggression except at the expense of the weak nomad tribes in their immediate neighbourhood. It was the battle-cry of Islām

which, appealing to the strongest forces of the Arab nature, his religious fervour and pride of race, first welded into one the disunited and scattered clans, and sent them forth inspired by a common motive on a mission of world-wide conquest.

In the northern part of the peninsula two of these kingdoms were of more than transient importance. The renowned city of Palmyra in the Syrian desert was the capital of the Ghassanid rulers, who were in close relations with and dependent on the Roman Empire; and in the north-east, with their centre at Hira on the Euphrates, the dynasty of the Lakhmids held sway, and found support and protection under the monarchs of Persia. Both rulers and peoples came under the influence of Christianity from the beginning of the fourth century onward; both also within two or three hundred years of this time were deprived of the last shadow of independence, and sank into the position of mere provinces of the neighbouring kingdoms. In the south there flourished the ancient and powerful state of the *Himyarites*, or Sabaeans, to which reference has already been made, a people whose origin and kinship are unknown, but who were closely related to, if not identical with the race of earliest immigrants into Abyssinia. Their sway extended over the entire southern portion of Arabia, the country of Hadramaut and Yemen. Here, according to the tradition, a great persecution of the Christians took place at the beginning of the sixth century, under a usurping chieftain who had become a convert to Judaism, and the Negus of Abyssinia was invited to interpose for their deliverance. He therefore sent an army and drove out the usurper, converting the province into a Christian

Palmyra and Hira: Himyarites

dependency of his own kingdom. This arrangement however only endured till the last quarter of the century, when the invaders were themselves defeated, and forced to retire to Africa; while the land from which they were expelled, instead of regaining complete independence, passed under the nominal rule of the Persian king. Thus by the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century no power was left within the bounds of the Arabian peninsula with sufficient strength and cohesion to present a firm front to any hostile movement or internal uprising, whether dictated by religious fanaticism or by a mere lust for power or wealth.

Pre-Muhammadan Arabia therefore was the home of a number of semi-independent tribes, more or less closely akin, for the most part engaged in pastoral pursuits, but with a wide-spreading net-work of commerce, which followed certain well-defined and ancient lines of communication, that covered practically the entire peninsula. These routes converged ultimately in the town of Mecca, which it would seem held from very early times a position of great importance as a centre of exchange, less perhaps of merchandise than of religious custom and thought. The merchants from the north-east and north-west, who here met and traded their wares with the natives from the rich and fertile districts of the south and south-east,[1]

[1] On the wealth and beauty of the frankincense country of Southern Arabia, far superior apparently to anything that the North can show, see a paper by the late Th. Bent in *The Royal Geographical Journal*, vol. vi. p. 109 ff. He writes of 'the surprising fertility of the valleys and mountains, the delicious health-giving air.' . . . 'Just above our camp, on the second day, water coming out of three holes in the mountain-side forms itself into a small and exquisitely beautiful lake, well stocked with duck and other water-birds . . . the encircling rocks are

found themselves not only at a frequented meeting-place for buying and selling, but also in the presence of a sanctuary of common religious worship, and a shrine to which pilgrims resorted from all parts of the country. It was this above all which gave to the city its influence and fame. Muhammad did not establish or invent the custom of making solemn pilgrimage to Mecca. It existed long before his day. He simply adopted into his religious system an existing and popular practice, purged it as far as he ventured or deemed it expedient to do of its heathen associations, and erected it into a pillar of the faith. But the origin of the custom lies far back in the mists of an uncertain antiquity.

Concerning the primitive beliefs and religious observances of these Arabian tribes much has been written, and the available evidence suggests certain general conclusions. The primitive constitution of the people being tribal, based on family relationship broadening out into that of the clan or tribe, their religious conceptions and practices may be expected to exhibit a similar character to those of other peoples of unsettled roving habits and in the early stages of development and civilisation. It is a mistake however to suppose that pre-Islāmic Arabia was strikingly deficient in culture as compared with the Arabia of later times. In two respects at least it was superior. Literature

Early Religious Beliefs

overhung with creepers, and covered with maidenhair and other ferns; huge fig-trees block up the valley, the lower branches of which are full of *débris*, showing how in the rainy season this gorge must be a raging torrent; limes, cactus, aloe, and mimosa form on all sides a delightful forest, whilst the mountains rising above the lake are clad almost to the summit with timber. Such a scene as this we never expected to witness in Arabia.'

flourished, in the form of lyric poetry and song, with a broad eloquence and freedom to which orthodox Islām was a stranger; and, as is proved by inscriptions, woman, so far from being under restraint, held independent positions of influence and authority, and if the example of Muhammad himself and Khadījah may be regarded as typical, exercised a measure of choice in the selection of their husbands.

Arabian society therefore was tribal and ordered in the main on a totemistic basis. Of the details of the organization however, or how far a common system was universally prevalent, little is known. The beliefs of the people were of the usual animistic character, but in particular it would appear that from the side of ancient Babylon had been adopted practices and beliefs which were of an astrological nature, sun and star worship, and regard in general for the occult influences of the heavenly powers. Belief also in the existence of spirits, *jinn* or genii, often localised, and for the most part malevolent, was universal. Sacrifices were offered with libations and presentation of gifts to the deities, whose presence was symbolized in numerous idols. Reverence also was paid to sacred pillars or stones, which were conceived as in some manner the seat of a supernatural presence and power. And pilgrimages were made to sacred shrines, where a ritual and custom had grown up, the origin of which was to be found in a far-off age. Of these holy places Mecca was the chief. And thither hosts of pilgrims travelled annually from every part of Arabia to discharge their obligations of devotion at the *Ka'abah*,[1] the sacred temple or shrine, which stood in the midst of the city.

[1] Ka'abah, properly a die, or cube. A view and plan of the *Beit Ullah*, the 'House of God' at Mecca, are given in *PSBA*,

Among the influences which were working in Arabia before the time of Muhammad in the direction of a higher and purer religious faith must be reckoned that of the *Hanīfs*, a sect or company around whose name and profession alike much obscurity still lingers. The term, which is explained as meaning literally 'one who inclines himself' or 'is inclined,'[1] is used in the Qur'ān itself, for the most part in reference to the faith of the patriarch Abraham, who is designated as a *Hanīf*.[2] Elsewhere a true worshipper of God is so named, in contrast with idolaters, or with those who fail in sincerity and steadfastness.[3] Hence it would seem to have conveyed to the mind of Muhammad himself the idea of a monotheist, or worshipper of the one true God; and later in the early centuries of Islām it was used also as a term equivalent to Muslim. The names moreover are recorded of certain men who in Mecca itself before the time of Muhammad taught doctrines opposed to the prevalent idolatry, of whom one was Waraka, the cousin of the prophet; and these men were known as *Hanīfs*. Hence some have supposed that by adopting the term for

vol. xxvi. p. 264 f., the former from an engraved copper stamp found at Acre in 1840, the latter reproduced from the 'Travels of Ali Bey' published at Paris in 1813. According to Arabic tradition the sacred house was built by Abraham, who instituted or gave his sanction to the rites of pilgrimage. See W. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, frontispiece and chap. iii.; R. F. Burton, *Pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Meccah*, 1903, vol. ii., App. ii.; *ERE*, vol. i. p. 667 ff., and for pre-Muhammadan religious beliefs art. *Arabs*, *ib.*, p. 659 ff.; T. P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, *s.v.* Ka'bah.

[1] Ab una (*sic*) religionis modo ad alterum inclinans, Freytag *s.v.*

[2] Sūras ii. 129; iii. 60, 89; vi. 79, 162; xvi. 121.

[3] Sūras x. 105; xxii. 32; xxx. 29; xcviii. 4.

his own followers Muhammad intended definitely to represent himself as re-establishing and proclaiming the religion of Abraham. On the other hand, it is pointed out that the passages in the Qur'ān in which the word occurs, or reference is made to the faith of Abraham, are late; earlier references would have been expected if the teaching of Muhammad were really derived from the Hanīfs, or if he had desired to identify his doctrines with the beliefs of the patriarch. It seems clear, however, that there existed in Arabia in the latter part of the sixth century a party who resisted the idolatrous tendencies around them, who had accordingly learnt and probably endeavoured to preach a purer faith. Whether Jewish or Christian influence should be recognised therein must remain uncertain. Of the Meccan Hanīfs some are definitely said to have adopted Christianity.[1]

Allah

The name and title also which Muhammad adopted to denote the one only God were of pre-Muhammadan origin and use. The inhabitants of Mecca appear to have worshipped *Allah* as the supreme Lord, secondary or subordinate to whom were the hosts of lesser divinities. Muhammad denied the existence of these, and so asserted the unique and solitary existence

[1] The real explanation and origin of the name *Hanīf* is still doubtful. The Syriac equivalent is used in the New Testament for Gentiles (ἐθνικοί, Matt. vi. 7; *ib.* x. 5; Acts xviii. 4, 17, etc.); Heb. חָנֵף, profane, hypocrite, Ps. xxxv. 16, etc. Margoliouth, *l.c.*, supposes that it denoted originally the followers of *Musaylimah*, the rival prophet, who is denounced in the Qur'ān, whence the name *Muslim* itself also was derived. Others have understood the name to refer to a wandering sect of ascetics, precursors of the later darwīshes. See D. S. Margoliouth in *JRAS*, 1903, p. 467 ff.; E. Sell, *Essays on Islām*[2], p. 242 ff.; Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.*; S. M. Zwemer, *Arabia, the Cradle of Islām*, p. 168.

and supremacy of Allah. The word is supposed, though doubtfully, to be a contraction of *al-ilāh*, and therefore equivalent to 'the god'; and in Muslim usage is a proper noun, the name of the deity, to be compared with the Jehovah (יהוה) of the Jews.[1]

Upon these early, and more or less indigenous beliefs and cults were superimposed practices and influences derived from four main sources; from the ancient creed and system of Zoroastrianism in Persia[2]; from Jewish and Christian traditions and teaching, which had for long found a measure of acceptance amongst the Arabs themselves, the latter reinforced also by the influence, not always peaceably exercised, of the neighbouring Christian kingdom of Abyssinia and of the Byzantine Empire; and from Sabeanism, an ancient creed which, on a foundation of astrological superstition and magic, had adopted and assimilated heterogeneous elements from many sides, and in a modified and semi-Christianised form maintains itself to the present day.

External Religious Influences

As the designation of a sect or religious creed *Sabeanism* denotes the worship of the host of heaven (צְבָא, Sabaoth), the cult of the stars, with all the associate beliefs in the occult influences of the heavenly powers. In an ethnic sense the term was used of two distinct peoples whose origin and history, as far as they are known, were entirely different. Of these the first was a heathen tribe or people in North Syria, in and around the district of Harran, who are said to have come originally from Mesopotamia, and to

Sabeanism

[1] D. B. Macdonald in *ERE*, i. p. 326 ff.; Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.* God.

[2] *supra*, p. 684 ff.

have been converted to Islām early in the ninth century, in the time of the Khalīf al-Ma'mūn. The true Sabeans, whose descendants were known as Christians of St. John the Baptist, had their home in lower Mesopotamia and in the Tigris-Euphrates delta, whence their name and influence spread with Babylonian culture into the Arabian peninsula. It is this latter people who became known to Muhammad, and to whom reference is made in the Qur'ān.[1]

The origin and derivation of the name *Sabean* are not free from doubt. The usual connection or comparison with the Hebrew צבא, though probable, is not undisputed. Muhammad himself was known to his contemporaries as the *Sābi* or 'pervert,' because he abandoned the religion of his fathers, from a root *ṣaba'a*, to change one's religion, depart; and Sabean is supposed therefore at first to have been a general term for heretics or unbelievers, which was afterwards specialised to a particular sect. In the Qur'ān Sābi is the name of a son of Seth, whence a Sabian or Sabean is supposed to have denoted a follower of the religion of Seth, or of Adam his father. An alternative explanation or derivation is from a root *ṣubba*, to wash, baptize, the name being applied to the sect from their practice of frequent bathing or ablution. In the Old Testament, Seba סְבָא, is a son of Cush (כּוּשׁ, Gen. x. 7); Sheba, שְׁבָא, is his grandson, *ib.* and v. 28; Sept. Σαβά, twice in v. 7, but in v. 28 Σαβεῦ, *v.l.* Σαβαῦ. The former is a third with Egypt and Cush in Is. xliii. 3, Sept. Σοήνη; compare Ps. lxxii. 10, the kings of Sheba and Seba, Sept. βασιλεῖς Ἀράβων κ. Σαβά. Seba has been supposed to be the same as λιμὴν Σαβά, the town and port on the west coast of the Red Sea. The Queen of Sheba comes to Solomon from a home probably in Arabia, 1 Kings x.; but in Ezek. xxvii. 22 f., and perhaps in xxxviii. 13, Sheba is apparently used of a Mesopotamian district, cp. *supra*, p. 722 n.; cp. also Is. lx. 6, and the Sabean raiders of Job i. 15. It is doubtful whether the Sabean kingdom of South Arabia (*supra*, p. 722 f.), which succeeded that of the Minaeans, was in existence in the time of Solomon.

[1] See E. G. Browne, *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, i. pp. 302–06.

In the Qur'ān reference is made three times to the Sabeans, and from the context it is apparent that Muhammad regarded them as worshippers of the true God :—

> As for those who believe and the Jews and the Christians and the Sabians, whosoever believeth in God and the last day, and doeth that which is right, they have their recompense with their Lord. Sūr. ii. 59.
>
> As for those who believe and the Jews and the Christians and the Sabians, whosoever believeth in God and the last day, and doeth that which is right, upon them shall no fear come, neither shall they be grieved. Sūr. v. 73.
>
> As for those who believe and the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and those who associate others with God (*i.e.* polytheists or idolaters), verily God will judge between them in the day of Resurrection. Sūr. xxii. 17.

Their descendants, to the number of four or five thousand, preserve their ancient religion and observances, in which Jewish and Christian elements have been engrafted upon a primitive star worship ; but except on festival days, when they dress in white, they are not outwardly distinguished from their Muslim neighbours. In these same white robes they bury their dead. They are said to turn to the North Star in prayer, and to observe a weekly Sabbath with baptismal rites. Their chief festival however is in the summer, and lasts for five days, during which they live by the riverside, where temporary places of worship are built, and ceremonies of daily sprinkling or baptism are observed. They possess a sacred book, the *Sidrā Rabbā*, or Great Book,[1] written in the Mandaïtic language, which the priests are said to read but not to understand. Prayers are addressed to *Hayya Kadema*,

[1] Published by A. M. Norberg in 1815–16, and by Petermann in 1867.

the supreme god, from whom is derived *Manda Hayya*, who became incarnate in a series of prophets from Abel to John the Baptist. Jesus Christ and Muhammad were both false prophets, and by the latter especially the true religion was actively opposed. Evil influences emanate generally from the planets and zodiacal signs. The sect is said to have greatly flourished in Babylonia during the rule of the ʿAbbāssids. That they have maintained their independence of faith and practice in any degree is probably due to the fact that in social intercourse and habit they have kept themselves aloof from their Muslim fellow countrymen; with whom they do not intermarry, nor do they engage in pilgrimage, or resort to sacred shrines.[1]

Christianity

By what route or at what period Christian influences first reached Arabia is not known; but in a more or less perverted form Christian teaching had been powerful in the country for centuries before the time of Muhammad, and must be reckoned amongst the sources from which it lay open to him to draw for system and doctrine. Judaism also had preceded Christianity, and wrought before and by the side of the latter. Jewish proselytes were found at Jerusalem at Pentecost, and listened to the preaching of Peter,[2] and would carry back to their own land the tidings of the strange things

[1] See S. M. Zwemer, *Arabia, the Cradle of Islām*, ch. xxviii.; Muir, *s.v. Sabeans*; M. Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer*.

[2] Κρῆτες καὶ Ἄραβες, Acts ii. 11; cp. Gal. i. 17 of St. Paul in Arabia, the latter the Roman province of Arabia, which embraced the northern part of the peninsula itself, but also considerable districts lying immediately east and south of Palestine.

they had seen and heard. The Apostle Bartholomew is said to have preached there on his way to India; and the early establishment of Christian communities is certified by the recorded presence of Arabian bishops at the Council of Nicæa, 325 A.D. Later, in the reign of Constantine, an Arian propaganda was successfully carried on. The heretical and corrupt nature of Arabian Christianity would seem indeed to have been notorious. The Collyridians, 'a female sect in Arabia dating from the fourth century,'[1] worshipped the Virgin Mary. The *Thnetopsychites* so-called also were false teachers of Arabia, to refute whom Origen was called in, according to whose doctrine body and soul perished together at death, and were together restored to life at the Resurrection.[2] The Arabian historians themselves make reference to certain tribes as Christian before the rise of Islām. Simeon Stylites is said to have been of Arab origin. And the presence of Christianity in the northern parts of the peninsula is shown by the efforts made by the sovereigns to stamp it out, and the persecutions with which at times they visited its professors. The legend in the Qur'ān of the prophet Sālih, and his mission to the people of Thamūd, has been supposed to be a reminiscence of a Christian teacher.[3]

The southern province of al-Yemen appears to have come at an early date under the influence, if not the actual over-lordship of the neighbouring Christian kingdom of Abyssinia. At the beginning of the sixth century many Christian churches were in existence, and the history records a large and

[1] Kurtz, i. p. 223.

[2] Euseb., *H. E.* vi. 37; Hagenbach, *History of Doctrines*, i. p. 307.

[3] Sūr. vii. 71 ff.; cp. Sale, i. p. 198 ff., Zwemer, p. 302 ff.

prosperous Christian community. Over an independent or semi-independent kingdom in the south there reigned at the time a certain prince, Dzu Nawass, who at the instigation, it is said, of the Jews initiated a great persecution of the Christians, put many of them to death, and destroyed their churches. The Negus of Abyssinia sent an expedition to exact vengeance for them, and to punish Dzu Nawass; the latter was deposed and slain, and as viceroy and representative of his Abyssinian lord a certain Abraha was placed on the throne. How far he was entitled to, or did in fact exercise an independent authority is uncertain. Early however in his reign he endeavoured to break the power of the ruling tribe of the Quraish at Mecca by placing obstacles in the way of the sacred pilgrimage, and sent to them a demand that they should recognise his authority and submit themselves to his rule. On their refusal he advanced against them with a great army, which he led in person, mounted on a white elephant. The Quraish inflicted on the invaders a decisive defeat, effected according to the Arab tradition by the instrumentality of birds, which let fall huge stones upon the Christian army and destroyed them.[1] The overthrow of the forces of Abraha was complete and final. In the same year, the 'Year of the Elephant,' two months after the great battle, Muhammad was born.

Whatever the value of the tradition may be,

[1] The tradition is recorded in the Qur'ān :—

'Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the army of the Elephant?
Did he not cause their stratagem to miscarry?
And he sent against them birds in flocks,
Claystones did they hurl down upon them,
And he made them like stubble eaten down.'

(Sūr. 105, Rodwell's translation.)

or to whatever degree the details of the narrative represent a true history, it is evident that at the time of the appearance of Muhammad there did not exist within the limits of the Arabian peninsula any force, whether political or religious, of sufficient strength and coherence to offer effective resistance to the propaganda, backed as it was by strength of arms, which he instituted.[1]

Arabia at the Advent of Muhammad

Arabic tradition relates that King Solomon, when he had finished the erection of the Temple at Jerusalem, journeyed with a numerous and imposing retinue into the land of Arabia, visited the territory of Mecca, and made the customary offerings at its sacred shrine. While there he foretold the future coming of Muhammad, announcing that he would be the greatest of the prophets, and would close the prophetic line. He declared also that a prediction of his mission and character was contained in the sacred books of the Jews.

Relation of Muhammad to Hebrew Prophets; and to Christian Scriptures

The legend illustrates in more than one direction Muhammadan belief with respect to the person and claims of their prophet. Muhammad is not to be regarded as the sole revealer of the Divine will, or the only channel through whom truth has reached mankind; but he is the last and greatest of a series of prophets, a series that includes among its chief members Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus Christ. They also, according to the measure of their ability and the revelation granted to them, communicated Divine truth and announced the

[1] See Zwemer, 307 ff.; Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.* Elephant; cp. *JRAS*, 1909, p. 499.

Divine will. All such revelations, however, have been superseded by that vouchsafed through Muhammad. This is the last; it is absolutely final and complete, and there neither is nor can be any other in time to come. Hence where there is apparent or real contradiction between the teaching of Muhammad and that of earlier prophets, the latter are necessarily in error, and their commands and doctrine must be abandoned in favour of the fuller clearer light given in Islām. Muhammadans further believe that the mission of their Prophet was foreannounced in the Jewish and Christian sacred books; and that in refusing to recognise his claims, and denying to him the title and rights of a true prophet, Jews and Christians alike are false to their own Scriptures, and unjustly conceal the witness which they bear to his prophetic office and commission from God.

To remove this impression generally from their minds, and to convince them of the silence of the Old and New Testaments with regard to their Prophet, would seem to be no easy task; and except in the case of those who have received a Western education, and have learned to trust Europeans, almost impossible. The followers of Islām are as a rule neither able nor willing to read the Jewish or Christian Scriptures for themselves. And were a translation of these put into their hands, which they were successfully induced to examine, the failure to discover any reference to Muhammad would merely be construed as a proof of that which they had been taught to believe, that the malice of Jew and Christian had diligently expurgated the Bible in order to remove all trace of the honourable testimony which it bore to the Arabian prophet, and to excuse their own unbelief.

It was then at Mecca that Muhammad was born in the autumn of the year 570 A.D., or possibly in the following spring, the '1st year of the Elephant.' His mother's name was Āminah, and his

father Abdullah, of the Arab tribe of the Quraish, the hereditary guardians and princely benefactors of the great temple. Muhammad, 'the raised,' is rather a title than a proper name, and is said to have been bestowed on the child by his grandfather soon after his birth, in the sacred enclosure of the Ka'abah. The privileges claimed by the Quraish included the right of making provision for the needs of the crowds of pilgrims during their stay in the holy city, and the bearing of the standard in time of war. About a century however before the birth of Muhammad, arrangements were made by which these services, originally concentrated in the hands of the chief of the tribe, were apportioned between rival claimants; to each of whom was assigned a special office and dignity, in order to satisfy opposing demands. Hāshim, the great-grandfather of Muhammad, obtained the right and honour of giving food and drink to the pilgrims; a duty of hospitality which he is said to have exercised with royal munificence. His son, Abdul-Muttalib, gained much repute and influence by rediscovering the sacred well Zemzem, which had been choked up and forgotten for many years, and thus securing to the pilgrims a plentiful supply of pure water. This spring had, according to the tradition, miraculously flowed forth from the ground at the feet of Ishmael, when lying abandoned by his mother Hagar. It is credited by the Arabs with all manner of refreshing and curative properties, and is believed to have a subterranean connection with a similar well in the courtyard of the great mosque at Medina.[1]

Birth and Family Life of Muhammad

[1] The quality of the water is apparently not always appreciated by unbelievers. Sir Rich. Burton in his *Pilgrimage to*

To Abdul-Muttalib were born ten sons, of whom the youngest, Abdullah, became the father of Muhammad. Before the birth of the Prophet, however, his father died while absent at Medina; and the child was brought up in the desert under the care of a foster-mother Halīmah, of the tribe of the Beni Sa'd, with whom he remained in the desert for two years, and the influences by which he was thus surrounded in early life had a large share in determining his character and moulding his future course. It was during his early life here, according to Arab tradition, that the angel Gabriel came to him one day, took out his heart, and purified it from the stains of original sin. The story may not improbably have been suggested by an attack of epilepsy, to fits of which he is said to have been subject in later years, and which he taught himself or was led to believe were due to supernatural agents and possession.[1] There can be little doubt that during these early years he pondered deeply on the problems of existence, and the needs of the scattered and disunited peoples by whom he was surrounded; while the pure air and solitude of the desert tended to confirm in him habits of austerity and moody

Mecca thus describes it:—'The flavour is a salt-bitter, much resembling an infusion of a teaspoonful of Epsom salts in a large tumbler of tepid water. . . . It is apt to cause diarrhoea and boils, and I never saw a stranger drink it without a wry face.' Memorial ed. (1893), vol. ii. p. 163.

[1] In the East epilepsy is almost universally regarded less as a disease than a divine visitation and a mark of especial divine favour to the patient. There is no clear evidence however that Muhammad actually suffered from such fits. His trances and visions were not obviously or necessarily epileptic; and even if really such, their influence on his career was not great. The verdict of H. Hirschfeld is perhaps too strong:—'If we have to take the epileptic fits as historical, then Islâm arose in spite of them, but not by their means.' *New Researches*, p. 32.

self-introspection, which he carried with him through life.

When five or six years old Muhammad visited Medīna with his mother, and may well have been deeply impressed by the thronging crowds of traders at the great commercial centre, which formed so striking a contrast to the quiet of his desert home or the religious associations of Mecca. During the return journey his mother died, and the boy became the ward first of his grandfather Abdul Muttalib, and on the latter's death two years subsequently of his uncle Abū Tālib, who for forty years proved himself a faithful guardian and protector, although to the last an unbeliever in his nephew's claims or mission. When twelve years of age his uncle took him as his companion on a prolonged journey undertaken for the purposes of trade through parts of Syria, and as far north as Basra on the Shatt-el-Arab. At this last place he is said to have met a Christian monk, who prophesied to his uncle of the lad's future greatness. Such travels and the experiences through which he passed proved a means of education, and not only prepared him for the responsibilities of a business life and for dealing with men, but gave him knowledge of the beliefs and practices of other forms of religion, knowledge of which he made full use hereafter in his own teaching and the elaboration of his system and doctrine.

Early Experiences

Little further is narrated concerning the Prophet's youth. At the age of twenty-five, through the influence of his uncle Abū Tālib, he was received into the household of a rich widow Khadījah, whose business manager or confidential agent he became, and on whose behalf he organised and

Marriage with Khadījah

carried out extensive trading expeditions, visiting Aleppo and Damascus, and Basra for the second time. On his return he was married to Khadījah, although she was much older than he, and she proved herself a faithful wife, supporting him through all the discouragements of his early ministry at Mecca, and exercising upon him a powerful restraining and moderating influence. Two sons and four daughters were born of the marriage, of whom one only survived her father, Fātima, the wife of 'Alī the fourth Khalīf; both the sons died in infancy. In Mecca Muhammad preached the doctrine of the unity of God, and denounced the idolatry of his fellow citizens, being protected by his uncle from the hostility of the men of Mecca, who disliked both his assumption of superiority, and his unsparing condemnation of their religious practices. Among his earliest converts were his wife Khadījah, who was the first to acknowledge her husband's claims as 'Apostle of God,' his cousin 'Alī, the son of Abū Tālib, his own adopted son Zaid, and Abū Bakr, afterwards his father-in-law and the first of the Khalīfs. The Prophet therefore had honour in his own household. This fact of itself is almost decisive proof that at the beginning, whatever may have been the case in later years, Muhammad was no mere impostor, foisting on others claims and teaching which he did not himself believe.

Muhammad as Arbiter

The future Prophet first came into prominence in his thirty-fifth year, during the demolition and rebuilding of the Ka'abah. A question of precedence is said to have arisen in connection with the necessary removal and replacing of the Black Stone; and the rival chieftains agreed to refer the decision to the first man who should enter the gate of the sacred

enclosure. Muhammad chanced to come in. But instead of profiting by his opportunity and moving the stone himself, he called for a carpet, and under his directions the leaders of the contending clans each took hold of a corner; thus they together raised the stone, while he himself guided it into place. The shrewdness and readiness of his judgement gained for him great repute among his fellow citizens.

Ali and Zaid

At about this time also Muhammad adopted two boys, each of whom was destined to play a great part in the future history of Islām, and in very different ways permanently to affect its character and course. The first was 'Alī, son of Abū Tālib and therefore cousin of Muhammad, but now a mere child, not more than six years old. The other was Zaid, a slave boy from Syria, who had belonged to the grandfather of Khadījah, whom the latter gave to Muhammad. The prophet set him free, and adopted him as his own son, so that he came to be known as Zaid ibn Muhammad.

Early Revelations

The accepted tradition records that the earliest definite revelation, when visions and fancies shaped themselves for the first time into language, came to Muhammad shortly after he had reached the age of forty. Being accustomed to retire for meditation and prayer to a certain cave on Mount Hira, near Mecca, otherwise called Jebel Nūr, or Mount of Light, he thrice heard a voice calling to him, and addressing him in the words of the 96th sūra of the Qur'ān :—

> Recite thou in the name of thy Lord who created,
> created man from clots of blood.
> Recite, for thy Lord is beneficent.

Who hath taught the use of the pen,
hath taught man that which he knoweth not.[1]

From these and similar expressions has probably originated the belief that Muhammad was illiterate, unable himself to read or write. Such a belief may have been adopted or sanctioned by the Prophet himself, to support the theory of the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān; cp. the phrase 'illiterate prophet,' used of himself, sūr. vii. 156. His position and history render the truth of the tradition exceedingly improbable. He must at least have received

[1] *Iqra'a*, from the root *qara'a*, Heb. קרא, is rather 'preach, 'proclaim'; Nöldeke renders 'predige.' It is probable that many of Muhammad's early utterances are modelled more or less consciously upon the phraseology of the Old Testament; compare, *e.g.*, Gen. iv. 26, 'then began men to call (לִקְרֹא) upon the name of the Lord,' xii. 8; Is. xl., 2, 3, 6. Hirschfeld translates :—

Proclaim the name of the Lord who has created,
Has created man from congealed blood,
Proclaim, while thy Lord is the Most High,
Who hath taught the use of the pen,
Taught man that which he knew not.

For the belief that the art of writing was taught to man by God cp. sūr. ii. 282, 'Let not the writer refuse to write as God hath taught him.' Tradition alone is responsible for the universal belief that in these few lines, the first part of sūra xcvi., is contained the earliest definite revelation or commission of the Prophet. It is said to have been repeated or confirmed by his wife 'Ayishah, from an account given her by Muhammad himself. The tradition however is accepted by practically all commentators and scholars, and is in itself sufficiently probable. A similar account of the work of creation is found in sūr. xxiii. 12 ff. :—'Verily we created man of the finest of the clay; then we placed him, a seed, in a safe abode; then we formed the seed into a clot of blood, and made the clot of blood into a fragment of flesh, and made the flesh into bones; and we clothed the bones with flesh; then we brought him forth, another creature'; cp. sūr. xxii. 5. See Hirschfeld, *New Researches*, p. 18 f., Brockelmann, *Gesch.*, p. 242, and the translations of Sale, etc.

an education fitting him for the discharge of important business transactions, from which instruction in these arts can hardly have been wanting. Cp. sūr. xxix. 47, 'thou didst not read any book before it, neither didst thou write it with thy right hand.'

The angel proceeded to enforce the duty of obedience to God, Who sees and knows all, and declared the punishment of those who refused to listen. The voice which spoke Muhammad afterwards learnt to recognise as that of Gabriel, the archangel, commissioned by God to make known to him the truth. But for the moment he was confused and alarmed, and took counsel with his wife Khadījah, who comforted him and encouraged him to believe in his own divine mission. During the two or three following years no revelation appears to have been given; and Muhammad became much depressed. Then, when he had come to the point of even meditating suicide, again the voice was heard, and the angel appeared. Hastening home he lay down, wrapt himself in his cloak, and listened to the words of the 74th sūra addressed to him by the angel :—

Second Revelation by Gabriel

O thou that art covered! arise and warn, and magnify thy Lord.
Purify thy garments, and depart from uncleanness.[1]

[1] The sententious ejaculatory character of the original is not easily preserved in a translation. Rodwell renders :—

O thou, enwrapped in thy mantle!
Arise and warn!
Thy Lord—magnify Him!
Thy raiment—purify it!
The abomination—flee it!

Cp. sūr. lxxiii. 1–4, which begins with a similar expression. Muhammad is perhaps consciously imitating the circumstances and action of earlier prophets; cp. especially Elijah in the cave

If there had been cessation or interruption of visions before, accompanied by consequent doubt and hesitation, the Prophet's mind was now made up, and the die finally and irrevocably cast. Thenceforth he believed himself to be the recipient of an unbroken series of revelations, which became more and more opportunist, as time advanced, and the necessities of his position seemed to demand legislative and constructive work, rather than protest against an already vanquished idolatry. From these revelations, treasured up, written down, and finally compared together and brought into harmony, the Qur'ān was formed, as it is known and read by the millions of adherents of Islām at the present day.[1] No attempt however seems ever to have been made to preserve the chronological sequence of the revelations. It is tradition alone that associates the various utterances with particular epochs or circumstances of the Prophet's experience, and in tracing in outline the history of his outward life, and the development of his doctrine and character, it is upon tradition, more or less reliable and consistent, that dependence has to be placed. At this critical and decisive epoch of his life Muhammad would be from forty to forty-five years of age.

Continuous Revelation

For some time few converts were won. In the

at Horeb, 1 Kings xix. 13. The last command, 'flee from abomination' *fa'hjur*, employs the same root from which is derived *Hijrah*, the Flight; cp. sūr. lxxiii. 10, 'flee from them in summary flight,' or 'befitting.' The 'abomination' is no doubt the idolatry of Mecca, and the verb implies, according to Dr. Hirschfeld, absolute separation and aloofness. See *New Researches*, p. 38 f.

[1] Cp. *infra*, p. 792 ff.

course of four years not more than forty seem to have been gathered in. The men of Mecca looked on, if not always with active hostility, yet with a sullen dislike, which was only prevented from breaking out into open persecution by respect for the strong clan-feeling, that safeguarded the Prophet. His uncle Abū Tālib, who had befriended him in the matter of Khadījah, although at no time a believer in his teaching or claims, refused to abandon him, or to withdraw, even when pressed to do so, his countenance and protection. There are not wanting also indications that his personal influence and standing in the city were greater than the meagre number of his adherents would suggest. The story, referred to above, that his aid was invoked as umpire in the rebuilding of the Ka'abah, 605 A.D., and the placing again in position of the sacred black stone, although some of the details may be due to a later desire to glorify the Prophet, points to the fact that even at that early period he was looked up to as a man of judgement and high character for fairness and moderation.[1]

Slow Progress

[1] 'Each family of the Quraish advanced pretensions to the exclusive right of placing the stone in its future receptacle. The contention became hot, and it was feared that bloodshed would ensue. For four or five days the building was suspended. At last the Quraish again assembled on the spot amicably to decide the difficulty. Then the oldest citizen arose and said: "O Quraish, hearken unto me! My advice is that the man who chanceth first to enter the court of the Ka'abah by yonder gate, he shall be chosen either to decide the difference amongst us, or himself to place the stone." The proposal was confirmed by acclamation, and they awaited the issue. Muhammad . . . was the first to enter. Seeing him they all exclaimed: "Here comes the faithful Arbiter; we are content to abide by his decision." Calm and self-possessed, Muhammad . . . at once resolved upon an expedient which should conciliate them all.

The irritation of the Quraish, however, which did not venture to touch Muhammad, displayed itself freely enough, and with impunity, towards his followers. To those accordingly who had no means of protecting themselves, and whom he was himself unable to defend, Muhammad gave permission to seek a refuge in Abyssinia. About a score, men and women, took advantage of the permission granted, and went into voluntary exile in the year 615 A.D. This brief migration and exile is known as the First Hijrah.

Persecution and First Emigration

Almost immediately after their departure a temporary compromise was effected by Muhammad with his opponents, the precise nature of which is obscure, although full details are given in the historical accounts.[1] Certain it is that on hearing of this arrangement the refugees at once returned to their own country. It seems not improbable that a real crisis is here indicated, which marks the point in the development of Muhammad's thought and

Attempted Compromise and Second Emigration

Taking off his mantle, and spreading it upon the ground, he placed the stone thereon, and said: "Now let one from each of your four divisions come forward, and raise a corner of this mantle." Four chiefs approached, and holding each a corner lifted thus the stone. When it had reached the proper height, Muhammad with his own hand guided it to its place.' Muir, *Life of Mahomet*[3], p. 28 f.

[1] Sūra liii. of the Qur'ān, after vers. 19, 20, 'What think ye of Lât, and of Uzza, and of Manât the third beside?' is said to have originally run, 'These are exalted maidens, whose intercession verily is to be sought after.' These words were subsequently withdrawn, and the present text substituted: 'Verily they are but names, which ye and your fathers invented.' See Sale, Koran, vol. ii. p. 174, note; Muir, p. 78 ff.; Koelle, p. 281 f.; Rodwell, p. 70; Clair-Tisdall, *Sources of Islâm*, p. 6.

conception of his own mission, at which he allowed the sternness and uncompromising character of his spiritual teaching to be tempered by more worldly motives, and a desire for political aggrandisement. If this was the case, he quickly perceived that he had gone too far. The concessions were withdrawn, and thenceforward the Prophet never wavered in his emphatic denunciation of idolatry. The immediate consequence was a renewal of persecution; and a second and larger band of exiles, journeying in small parties to the number altogether of about one hundred, went forth into Abyssinia. This later emigration took place within a year of the first.

Important Conversions

In the same year there were won over to his side two men, whose name and influence gave a prestige to the cause of Muhammad, which hitherto it had lacked. The first was his uncle Hamza, son of Abdul-Muttalib, renowned as one of the bravest of the early Muslims; who was slain fighting against the Meccan host at the battle of Uhud, 625 A.D. The other was Omar,[1] afterwards father-in-law of the Prophet, and second in succession of the Khalifs. By their adhesion the band of his disciples received a considerable accession of strength. But at the same time the anger and hostility of the Quraish were aroused to deeds of greater violence.

Interdict

Their hatred manifested itself in the extreme measure of an interdict, which included all the family of Muhammad as well as his followers. The interdict was enforced for two or three years, during which the Muhammadans were confined within a single quarter

[1] *'Umr.* The more familiar, though less correct form may fairly claim the prescriptive right of usage in English.

of the town, all intercourse with them being forbidden. Only at the annual season of the pilgrimage were they free to come forth; and these occasions were made use of by Muhammad for preaching to the assembled crowds. At the end of this period the sentence of excommunication was removed, the practical inconveniences having been found to be very great. The Quraish were opportunely released, —so the tradition runs,—from their oath of non-intercourse by the voracity of some mice, which devoured in the Ka'abah the parchment on which the sacred vow had been engrossed.

Deaths of Khadījah and Abū Tālib

In the same year however in which the interdict was abandoned, in the early months of 620 A.D., misfortunes befell the Prophet, which threatened at first to more than counterbalance the advantage secured in his recovered freedom of movement. His wife Khadījah died at the age of 65. To her he owed much for her faithful encouragement in the dark early days of depression and ill-success, when misgivings pressed hard upon him, and the spirit of distrust both of himself and his mission. Her faith in him appears never to have wavered; and she sustained his confidence when it was ready to droop and fail. In some respects a more serious loss was the death of his uncle and protector, Abū Tālib. On his deathbed the latter commended Muhammad to the care of his sons and heirs; but these appear very ill to have discharged their trust. The persecution, which had hitherto affected chiefly his followers, began from this time to fall heavily on the Prophet himself. For the former loss at least he found ready consolation in his betrothal within a few months to 'Ayishah, daughter of Abū Bakr, now a mere child, who

became for the remainder of his life his favourite wife, and survived him for nearly half a century.

Close following upon the death of Abū Tālib there ensued political trouble for Muhammad. Much as he was indebted to Khadījah for personal support and encouragement, it was the name and influence of Abū Tālib that had shielded him from the persecution which had overtaken so many of his adherents. His position at Mecca seems quickly to have become almost intolerable; and he therefore initiated a new course of action by visiting the neighbouring village or town of Tāyif, hoping to win over its citizens to his side, and to make it the centre of his religious propaganda. The attempt was a failure, the men of Tāyif refusing to abandon their idols; and he was unable to remain there more than ten days. Muhammad returned disheartened to his own city. But on the way, according to the story, as he was resting in an idol grove, the jinns came together to listen to his preaching, and he was thereby encouraged to persevere in his mission.[1] Further and more substantial encouragement followed. At the ensuing annual festival in Mecca there were present some strangers from Medina, with whom Muhammad conversed, and whom he succeeded in convincing of the truth of his teaching and claims.

Tāyif; Preaching to Jinns

[1] Sūra xlvi. 27:—'And when we turned aside unto thee the people of the jinns to listen to the Qur'ān; then when they were present at the reading of it they said, Give ear. And when it was ended, they returned to their own people, preaching unto them. They said, O our people, verily we have heard a book that has been sent down since Moses, confirming that which was before it; it guideth into the truth, and into the right way. O our people, obey the preacher of God, and believe in him, that he may pardon you your sins, and may deliver you from a grievous punishment.' Cp. also sūra lxxii., the 'sūra of the jinn.'

The belief in 'jinn,' genii, is a very ancient Arabian superstition. They are usually, but not always malevolent; and may assume various shapes, appearing most frequently however in human form. 'Ghools,' *ghūl*, are demons inferior to the jinn, who dwell usually in cemeteries, and practice cannibalism. King Solomon wielded supreme power over the jinn, and could compel them to do his bidding. See Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.* 'genii'; W. Robertson Smith, *Rel. of the Semites*, 1894, pp. 119 ff., 441; Zwemer, *Arabia*, p. 165; Sell, p. 205 f.; and for the jinn in Morocco, Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, i. p. 378 f., ii. pp. 493, 589, 640, 642; and *Athen.*, Dec. 1899, p. 805. The root *janna* signifies to cover, conceal; *texit, occultus fuit*, Freytag; and therefore it would seem that the jinn were originally conceived as supernatural agents invoked by primitive man to explain anything unusual or mysterious in the world around him.

These converts returned a year later, accompanied by their kinsfolk, to whom they had preached with acceptance the new faith. And a

Pledge of Akaba

dozen men, citizens of Medina, took a secret oath of fidelity to the person of Muhammad, and of belief in the doctrine which he taught. This was called the first Pledge of Akaba, from the name of the place where it was given.[1]

The new disciples spent a year in instructing and making converts among their friends at home, then returned to Mecca at the next season of pilgrimage with a band of seventy-three men and two women, prepared to do homage to Muhammad, and to abide by his teaching. At a secret meeting, held on the same spot, was taken the

Second Pledge of Akaba

[1] The pledge ran as follows:—'We will not worship any but one God; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, nor will we kill our children; we will not slander in anywise; and we will obey the Prophet in everything that is just.'

second Pledge or Oath of Akaba, in the spring of the year 622 A.D. Here and now also the decision was arrived at by Muhammad and his Meccan followers to emigrate to Medina, and under the protection of his adherents there, and as it was hoped with more favourable auspices, to make that city henceforth his home, and the centre of his missionary labours. It was at this period of his life also, according to the tradition, that the Prophet made his miraculous journey by night to Jerusalem and Paradise, meeting in the latter place with the prophets who had preceded him, and receiving the Divine instructions with regard to the hours of prayer.[1]

Within a few months the decision was carried out. To the number of about one hundred and fifty, those who had cast in their lot with the Prophet moved northwards in small parties, until all were gathered at Medina. Muhammad himself, with Abu Bakr and Ali, remained to the last. Around the story of his escape, when evading his enemies he finally and secretly left the city, and his concealment for three days in a cave south of Mecca, followed by a perilous journey to his new home, the pious invention of his disciples has thrown a halo of romance and miracle, to enhance the glory of the Prophet.[2] A

Flight to Medina

[1] Cp. Koelle, *Mahommed and Mahommedanism*, p. 304 ff.; *infra*, p. 771.

[2] Some of these incidents bear every mark of genuineness :— 'Glancing upwards at a crevice (of the cave) through which the morning light began to break, Abu Bakr whispered, "What if one were to look through the chink, and see us underneath hi very feet." "Think not thus, Abu Bakr," said the Prophet; "we are two, but God is in the midst a third."' Muir, *Life of Mahomet*. p. 135. See the story of the Flight from Muhammadan historians in Koelle, p. 315 ff.

mosque and houses for the use of Muhammad and his wives were built at Medina, on the spot where his camel stopped on his entrance into the city. Thus was accomplished the fateful *Hijrah*, or Flight to Medina, in the summer (June 20) of the year 622 A.D.—a date which forms the starting-point of Muhammadan chronology all over the world. The official appointment however of the era, although it had long been in practical and habitual use, was not made until seventeen years later, in the reign of the Khalif Omar.

It is natural to ask what were the causes which secured for the teaching of Muhammad so favourable a reception at Medina, and that too without the personal presence of the Prophet, when all his efforts and preaching at Mecca had failed to command any large measure of success. In the former town his position appears to have been secure, and his authority almost undisputed from the first. The difference in the character and populations of the two towns accounts to a large extent, if not entirely, for the different result. Mecca, with its shrine of the Ka'abah, was the stronghold of idolatry; and for its citizens the most powerful motives of self-interest and preservation, all the traditions of the past and hopes for the future, were bound up with the maintenance and security of its forms of worship. When he denounced there the false gods that his fellow countrymen served, Muhammad assailed the idolatrous system in its strongest fortress, and in the face of defenders most concerned to preserve it intact. Medina however was not a sacred city, the centre of a jealous national and religious life; but one eminently cosmopolitan, the home of a wide-ranging traffic and merchandise. Lying two hundred and fifty miles north of Mecca,

Medina

it was open to external influences on the side both of Persia and of the Roman Empire, from which the southern town was almost entirely secluded. Strong colonies of Jews, moreover, had been for centuries settled in the neighbourhood. And although they do not appear to have made, probably had not sought to make proselytes from the surrounding Arabian peoples, yet their example, together with even a superficial knowledge of their practices and beliefs, must have weakened the hold of idolatry, and prepared the way for a purer faith. Christianity also, to a less extent and in a debased form, had found its way to Medina; and Christian monks and hermits made their homes in the northern desert between Syria and Mesopotamia. In the ferment and unrest brought about by these conflicting forms of belief was presented the opportunity for the preaching of a faith which, while it combined in itself much that was best from these, clothed all in a national garb, and was proclaimed by one of the people's own kindred and blood. It was largely because the teaching of Muhammad appealed to their patriotism and pride of race, and offered itself in a form which all could understand, that it succeeded, where a mere foreign propaganda would have failed.

Sources of Doctrine

The doctrine and system of Muhammad therefore, as they shaped themselves during these early years at Medina, contain elements borrowed or adapted from at least three external sources, besides that which he took over from the native idolatrous practices and beliefs of Arabia. From Judaism, but the Judaism rather of the Talmud than of the Old Testament[1];

[1] This view appears to be questioned by Dr. Hirschfeld :— 'Nor was it Rabbinic Judaism, but Mosaism of which Islâm is a

from Christianity, although a Christianity that had strayed far from the simplicity of the Gospels and of St. Paul; and from Persian Zoroastrianism, the peculiar doctrines and cosmology of which, while spreading far to Asia Minor and Greece, had not left neighbouring peoples untouched. Jewish influences had been on the whole the strongest. From the lips of Jewish doctors, or those who had been in contact with them, Muhammad heard the stories of the Old Testament, which he afterwards embodied, often in strangely distorted forms, in the Qur'ān. It is not improbable that his conception of inspiration, and of the mode of the Divine communications to himself, are derived from the same source. Above all, to Judaism he owed the stern unbending monotheism, the doctrine of the Unity and Sovereignty of God, which has been the strength of Islām in all ages, as it was the secret of the power of Muhammad himself. To Christianity his debt is less easily defined, and his knowledge of its real doctrines and practices was limited. Mention is made in the Qur'ān of the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, and Zacharias. Jesus Christ is referred to by name as a prophet preparing the way for Muhammad, his greater successor; and his gospel is spoken of more than once. But Christian influence was perhaps rather indirect in softening the harshness and rigour of his earlier principles. Certain it is that throughout his career he dealt more leniently with Christians than with Jews, and exhibited less intolerance towards the former than the latter. From Persia was borrowed his representation of the Last Things, the doctrines and

weak imitation,' *New Researches*, p. 62. Of the Old Testament saints Moses is more frequently mentioned in the Qur'ān than any other.

details of heaven and hell, of the resurrection, and of the final judgement; in part at least also his belief in the existence of spirit or jinn, and his teaching with respect to their origin, character, and functions.

Thus it is a mistake to suppose that Islām is the product merely of the reflecting mind of its founder. On the contrary it is an eclectic system, the various elements of which are pressed into service, and welded into a fairly consistent whole by the genius and unremitting energy of one man. Whatever his faults it must be conceded to Muhammad that he thoroughly understood his fellow countrymen, and knew how to take advantage of the opportunity which favouring circumstances placed within his grasp.

Advantageous Position at Medina

The position of Muhammad, therefore, was greatly strengthened by his removal to Medina. Instead of finding himself in the midst of a community actively and uncompromisingly hostile to his principles and claims, he was now surrounded by men whom a wider knowledge of the world, and contact with different nationalities and creeds, had predisposed to toleration, if not to actual sympathy with the doctrines which he proclaimed. He was accordingly able to adopt the rôle of the warrior and legislator, winning his way by victory and force, and by law and formal regulation shaping the policy and life of the constantly growing community devoted to him. At the first he appears to have made considerable efforts and concessions, in order to win to his side the Jews. When these failed, and he became convinced that no recognition of his authority or claims was to be looked for from them, when also he found himself strong enough to dispense with their sympathy and expected support, courtesy was exchanged for

invective, they were assailed with the fiercest denunciations, and experienced at his hands treatment almost unexampled in its violence.

Parties at Medina

For the first year or two subsequent to the Flight, the attention of the Prophet was fully occupied in consolidating his own position, and meeting the attacks of his enemies from Mecca. His adherents at this period in Medina, on whom he relied for support, and who were equally devoted to his person, belonged to two parties. There were the Refugees, the men who had migrated with Muhammad from Mecca, and who were known as *Muhājirūn*, 'emigrants' or 'exiles'[1]; and the converts, citizens of Medina, who bore the name of *Ansār*, or 'helpers.' Of both parties the numbers rapidly multiplied. In the former class were included all who subsequently joined the Muhammadan ranks from Mecca, previous to the taking of that city in the eighth year of the Hijrah. The latter embraced all the inhabitants of Medina, when these became, at least nominally, adherents of the Prophet.

Warfare with the Quraish

The first move against the Quraish at Mecca was made by Muhammad himself. It would seem that the old Arab predatory instinct was actively working within him, joined with the desire for revenge on his persecutors. Perhaps also there was added the politic aim of giving his followers

[1] Sūr. viii. 73:—'Verily they who have believed and have emigrated and striven with their substance and their persons in the cause of God, and they who have received and helped (the Prophet), these are near of kin with one another'; cp. vers. 75, and sūr. lx. 10. This passage is said to have been abrogated by xxxiii. 6:—'The Prophet is nearer of kin to believers than they are to themselves . . . and they who are related by blood are nearer of kin to one another than (other) believers or the Muhājirūn.'

something to do, in order to occupy their thoughts and hands. Certainly he planned more than one marauding expedition against the rich Meccan caravans that took the route northwards into Syria, passing between Medina and the sea. On the last of these occasions, in the second year of the Flight, Muhammad himself went forth with about three hundred followers to surprise a caravan led by Abū Sufyān, his former inveterate opponent at Mecca, and a leading man among the Quraish. The caravan succeeded in evading the attack; but an army sent from Mecca to its aid met the Muslims in battle, and was defeated. This was the fight of *Badr*, so called from the spot near Medina where it took place,—the first of the many engagements in which the Muhammadans, by their impetuous bravery and fanatic devotion, carried the day against superior numbers of their opponents. Success is attributed in the Qur'ān to Divine assistance,[1] and according to the tradition the Muslim army was reinforced by a company of 3,000 angels. After the battle distribution of the spoil was made according to the proportion then for the first time ordained, and subsequently observed on all occasions, a fifth of the whole being set apart for God and the Prophet, and the remainder equally divided. The prestige and firmer authority which the victory brought to Muhammad are reflected in the tone of the revelations, which thenceforward in the Qur'ān become more commanding and confident.

Hostilities continued between Mecca and Medina

[1] Sūr. iii. 11 :—'Ye have already had a sign when the two armies met. The one army fought in the cause of God, and the other was infidel . . . and God aids with His help whom He pleases.'

for some years, with varying fortune. In the beginning of the year 625 A.D. the Meccan forces, numbering 300, under the command of Khālid, invaded the territory of Medina, and at Uhud, within three miles of the town, the Muslim army was routed, Muhammad himself wounded, and Hamza, his best warrior, slain with seventy of his chief adherents, 'martyrs.' The war of the Fosse or Ditch followed two years later, in which Medina was besieged by the forces of the Quraish, in alliance with a Jewish tribe or tribes belonging to the neighbourhood.[1] The attack was successfully repulsed; and after the departure of the Quraish a cruel vengeance was inflicted on the Jews, who were induced or compelled to surrender at discretion. The men, to the number of about eight hundred, were put to death, the women and children sold into slavery, with the exception of one Jewish girl whom Muhammad reserved for himself for a wife.

Attempt to Visit Mecca; Truce of Hudaibiyah

In the sixth year of the Hijrah, the spring of 628 A.D., at the time of the annual pilgrimage, Muhammad, accompanied by a large number of his followers, set out for Mecca, with the intention of performing the usual ceremonies at the sacred shrine, from which he had now for so long been excluded. He appears to have thought that the truce of arms, scrupulously observed by all the Arab tribes at this season, would ensure him freedom from molestation; or that if the Quraish violated the truce by attacking him, they would put themselves manifestly in the wrong in the eyes of all the neighbouring clans, and thus give him an undoubted advantage over them. If he really anticipated a free and unobstructed entrance

[1] Sūr. xxxiii. 9 ff.

into Mecca, he soon found himself mistaken. The Quraish assembled in arms to bar his approach, and in spite of all diplomacy remained firm in their purpose not to suffer the Prophet or his adherents to set foot in the holy city. After some negotiation a truce was agreed upon for ten years, the chief conditions of which were that Muhammad should at once withdraw, together with his people, but be permitted to return the following year, and remain then for three days within the limits of the sacred territory; and that during the truce full liberty should be accorded to the adherents of either party, being of full age, to join the other. It was the first occasion on which the Quraish had treated with Muhammad, as with an equal and independent power; and marked therefore a great advance in the recognition of his political, if not of his spiritual claims. Meanwhile it may well have been that the encouragement and importance accruing from this success were strong among the influences which urged him, within the next two or three years, to send messengers to the princes and rulers of the surrounding kingdoms, including Heraclius, Emperor of Constantinople, summoning them to embrace the religion of Islām, and to acknowledge himself as the Prophet of God. The treaty with the Quraish was named, from the spot where it was negotiated, the treaty of *Hudaibiyah*.

In the following year Khaibar, a city some fifty or sixty miles north of Medina, in a district inhabited chiefly by Jews, was attacked by Muhammad with a force of 1,600 men. The town was sacked, a rich booty taken, and the Jewish inhabitants either put to death or driven into exile. The attempt of a Jewish maiden, Zainab, to poison the Prophet proved unsuccessful; **Khaibar**

but it is said that he never recovered fully from the effects. The early years of the truce also, when there was peace with the Quraish, were utilised by him in general for extending his authority by force of arms in the districts around Medina.

Pilgrimage

According to the agreement, Muhammad was allowed at the appointed time to perform unmolested all the ceremonies of the annual pilgrimage, entering Mecca with a large body of adherents numbering about two thousand; while the Quraish abandoned for the time their city and homes, and from the surrounding hills watched his proceedings. The Meccan people appear on the whole faithfully to have observed the treaty. But within twelve months, in 630 A.D., an alleged infraction of the treaty gave Muhammad an excuse for marching against Mecca itself, of which he was not slow to take advantage.

Taking of Mecca

The details of the attack that followed are not very clear. Treachery seems to have been at work within the city. Abū Sufyān, hitherto his principal opponent, made his submission; and Mecca was taken with but slight opposition. It must have been a striking scene, when Muhammad with his devoted troops entered as conqueror the city which eight years before had cast him forth as an exile.[1] The army entered in four divisions from the four sides, meeting at the sacred temple in the midst of the city. Thither Muhammad himself proceeded, and took his stand at the entrance to the Ka'abah, while the idols around, to the number, according to the

[1] Sūr. xlviii., the Sūra of Victory, is said to have been revealed to commemorate the taking of the city. Another tradition however refers it to the victory of Khaibar.

tradition, of three hundred and sixty, were one by one at his command hewn to the ground.[1] The sacred character of the temple itself was confirmed, and its rights and privileges safeguarded; but it was henceforth to be devoted to the worship of the one only God. Muhammad himself conducted the prayers for the first time according to the Muslim ritual as practised at Medina. And the form of service then instituted has been observed without interruption to the present day.

To the Meccans themselves, with but few exceptions, Muhammad granted a free pardon, on condition that they should make to him their submission and should adopt the religion of Islām. The condition was accepted without demur, the entire population became converts, and the city was thus changed from a stronghold of heathen worship into the sacred religious centre of the new faith. To his own tribe especially, the Quraish, the Prophet showed great favour,—a course of action which was the occasion of some murmuring among his earlier adherents at Medina. From the taking of Mecca therefore, and the conversion of its citizens, may be dated the ascendancy of this tribe in the counsels and history of Islām. The prince and head of the Muhammadan faith, though he may dwell elsewhere than at Mecca or Medina, must by the letter of the law be descended from the Quraish.

The remaining years of the life of Muhammad were marked by no event of equal importance with the capture of Mecca. They were however years of unbroken prosperity and extension abroad. His

[1] He is said to have pointed with his staff to each of the idols in succession, reciting the verse from the Qur'ān :—'Truth is come, and falsehood vanisheth away; verily falsehood is vanished away.' Sūra xvii. 83.

authority was established over practically the whole of Arabia, Christians and Jews alone refusing to acknowledge his claims as the Prophet of God. These were allowed to remain in a position of inferiority and subjection, paying tribute and enjoying protection, but forbidden to approach the holy city and the Ka'abah, or to build new houses of prayer, although permission was given to repair old churches or synagogues that were in danger of falling; and a formal declaration was issued that henceforth no infidel was to be allowed to approach the sacred shrines.

Rapid Extension

Among the places subdued at this period was the town of Tāyif, to the citizens of which Muhammad had made his unsuccessful appeal more than eight years before. The first besieging force, led by the Prophet in person, was compelled to retire. But the inhabitants, after an interval of ten months, pressed by the attack of the tribes around, sent to him ambassadors, who agreed to the terms imposed. These conditions included the immediate destruction of their famous idol-goddess *Lāt*, or *Al-lāt*, and the acceptance by the people of the principles of Islām. Tāyif was the last place of any importance in Arabia to hold out against Muhammad.[1] Expeditions were also sent against the Greeks, but met with no success. And one of the last acts of the Prophet's life was to organise a fresh campaign against these enemies on a larger scale; an undertaking which it fell to the lot of his successors to carry through, and which was the prelude to many centuries of warfare, culminating in the taking of Constantinople, and

[1] Muir calls attention also to the fact that it seems to have been the only place where the destruction of the idols occasioned any regret. *Life*, p. 437.

the establishment of the Muhammadan power in Europe.

In the spring of the following year, the tenth of the Hijrah, 632 A.D., Muhammad presided in person for the last time over the ceremonies of the annual pilgrimage, carrying out himself with great exactness all the appropriate rites and observances in order, for an example to his followers for all time.

Last Pilgrimage

Shortly after his return to Medina there came upon him an attack of fever and sickness, in part attributable to some poisoned food eaten by him years before.[1] The reports of his failing health seem to have encouraged risings against his authority in different parts of the country. Three at least are recorded, but the details in each instance are obscure, nor does any permanent success seem to have attended the efforts to throw off the Muhammadan yoke. The leaders were Musaylimah, the famous rival of Muhammad in the prophetic office, of whom the latter is said to have been at one time a pupil[2]; Aswad, the chieftain of an Arabian tribe, who not long before Muhammad's death made himself master for a short time of a large part of the province of Yemen; and Tulaihah, of Najd, who laid claim to divine inspiration and power, but submitted and after the death of the Prophet became a Muslim.[3] The illness from which he suffered refused to yield to remedies, and Muhammad himself became conscious that the end was near. When too weak to conduct public prayers, he deputed

Death of Muhammad

[1] *supra*, p. 761 f.

[2] D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammed*, pp. 81, 454; Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.*

[3] Hughes, *ss.vv.*

Abū Bakr, his father-in-law, to take his place, thus designating him as his successor. His sickness proved fatal. And on the eighth of June, 632 A.D., exactly ten years after his flight from Mecca, in the chamber of Ayishah, his young and favourite wife, with his head lying on her bosom, the great Prophet of Arabia passed away.[1] His grave was dug within the house on the spot where he had died; and there his body was laid to rest, amid the expressed sorrow and respect, beyond a doubt for the most part genuine, of his numerous followers.[2]

Character of Muhammad

The greatness of Muhammad, as an organiser and leader of men, and as the originator of a profound and far-reaching religious reform, the effects of which upon the thought and belief and habit of a large proportion of mankind have been immeasurable, is not to be denied. Upon his moral character however, and the sincerity of his motives the most divergent judgements have been pronounced. On the one hand he has been assailed in terms that have approached, if they have not passed the bounds of lawful invective, and that any good could come out of Mecca has been vehemently denied. On the other a veil of courteous

[1] The Shī'ahs however assert that he died in the arms of Ali.

[2] Tradition records that the Angel of Death came to Muhammad to ask leave to take his soul, having never sought permission before from any mortal. Muhammad consented. Gabriel also came to bid him farewell. '" Peace be on thee," he said, " O Prophet of the Lord! This is the last time that I shall tread the earth; with this world I have now concern no longer." So the Prophet died; and there arose a wailing of celestial voices (the sound was audible, but no form was seen), saying: " Peace be on you, ye inhabitants of this house, and mercy from the Lord, and His blessing. Every soul shall taste death," ' etc. Cp. Muir, *Life*, p. 479 f.

apology has been extended over his every action, and the portrait drawn of an earnest simple straightforward man, deeply convinced of religious truth, upon whom circumstances and the necessities of his position forced the rôle of a politician and warrior. Juster and more temperate views seem now to prevail on either side. Perhaps few characters in history have been more complex, or have combined stronger conviction and will-power with elastic response in external matters to the influence and leading of environment. It is impossible to study the Qur'ān with the sanction there given to exceptional licence in the interests of the Prophet himself, and with its savage denunciations of his foes, and yet hold fast to a belief in the moral purity and integrity of Muhammad's motives and conduct. But that he at least entered upon his mission with sincerity, and a deep conviction of the wrong of idolatry, as a denial of the rights and authority of the one God, is attested by the character and devotion of his first converts, and the entire history of the initial years at Mecca. It must be acknowledged however that it is not easy to define exactly what he did believe concerning the earlier revelations recorded in the Qur'ān. That in later years he consciously invented revelations for the sake of political and personal ends can hardly be doubted. But to him, doctrinally, mankind owes the sternest, most uncompromising assertion of the Unity of the Godhead that, apart from Judaism and Christianity, the world has ever known. The debt is not small, nor have the effects of his proclamation been insignificant or of transient force.

In most respects also the Prophet was obedient to the instincts and practices of his own time. It is all to his honour that he seems to have maintained

to the last a simplicity of habit and life that contrasts strongly with the luxury and display of many of his successors. His people and age however had never learnt the excellence of the quality of mercy; and Muhammad was hard and cruel to all who stood in the way of his personal ambitions or political schemes. In his later years at least he allowed himself to be ruled by the importunities of his lower nature, and cannot be acquitted of crimes prompted by an uncontrolled self-indulgence and lust. If his initial purposes and conceptions were lofty and disinterested, the end did not correspond to the beginning; and in later life Muhammad failed altogether to respond with moral strength to the opportunities and demands of wide political success.

His personal independence also and insight into the character of others were remarkable. Marking out his own course, whether in doctrine or action, he held to it alike through evil report and through good. It would have been easy for him to have adopted and proclaimed either Judaism or Christianity, both of which creeds maintained his central doctrine of the Divine Unity, and so to have won over to his side at once a large number of sympathisers and a considerable influence. He elected to move on his own path, and to establish a system of his own, which indebted to many forms of religious belief should yet be identical with none. In this also it was probably a high and overmastering ambition that led him on; to be the founder of a new and all-embracing creed, which should exalt the sovereignty of God, and therewith the authority and dignity of His prophet. He was a great teacher, a great commander of men, possessed of a keen insight into their thoughts and hearts,

and resolute to impose upon them his own will, and to bend them to the execution of his purposes.[1]

Muhammad made no direct or authoritative provision for a successor to himself; although by the Sunnīs, the orthodox Muslims, it is believed that by appointing Abu Bakr as his substitute during his last illness to lead the public prayers in the mosque at Medina, he intended to mark him out as the fittest to take his place in the guidance and oversight of the people. The Shī'ahs, on the contrary, hold that none but Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, had a right to succeed. In the absence therefore of formal direction, the first four successors of Muhammad in the government, political and religious, of the Muslim state were elected by a popular vote, and being thus dependent on the will of the people made no attempt to found dynasties or to secure the dominion for their posterity. They are known as the four orthodox Khalīfs, the latter word signifying a successor or deputy. All Muhammadans agree that the Khalīf must belong to the tribe of the Quraish, but the Shī'ahs further limit the right of succession to the family of the Prophet and his direct descendants. In their belief therefore the first three Khalīfs, Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othman,[2] were usurpers; and 'Alī, the fourth, was

Early Khalifs

[1] Cp. on the character of Muhammad especially Muir, *Life*, ch. xxvii.; Amir Ali, *Spirit of Islâm*, London, 1896; Margoliouth, pp. vi. f., 462 ff.; *al.*

[2] The names are more correctly written 'Umr, and 'Uthmān. The forms in the text have the prescriptive right of usage; and it is perhaps pedantic to attempt to change them.

the first rightfully to hold the office.[1] Abū Bakr and Omar were fathers-in-law of the Prophet; Othman and ʿAlī his sons-in-law, the latter having married his favourite daughter, Fātimah. The first three ruled from Medina. After Othman's death the kingdom was broken up, and Arabia never again became the centre politically of the Muhammadan world.

Abū Bakr

The rule of Abū Bakr lasted for only two years, and his care was mainly directed to the consolidation of positions already won, and the execution of projects formed before the death of Muhammad himself. It was a time of internal regulation and settlement, rather than of activity and extension abroad. When Muhammad died, his authority was nowhere acknowledged beyond the confines of Arabia; although he had himself, as we have seen, begun to contemplate foreign aggression, and had called upon distant potentates to admit his claims, and to accept the newly-established religion. Almost immediately however under his successors began that marvellous series of Arab conquests which came within a little of carrying the arms and faith of Islām to the limits of the known world. Chaldaea and Persia in the north-east, Palestine and Syria on the north, Egypt on the west, were the first to feel the weight of the Muslim power.

Omar

Abū Bakr died in 634 A.D., the only one of the four early Khalīfs who was suffered to go down to his grave in peace. When Omar succeeded him, the countries of Chaldaea and Syria had already been entered by the Muhammadan armies. In the same year a great battle was fought at Wakusa, on the Yarmuk, where the

[1] Cp. *infra*, p. 847 ff.

troops of Heraclius, the Emperor of the Greeks, were defeated with great slaughter. By this victory the way was opened to Damascus, which city was assaulted and captured in the following summer, 635 A.D.; and it has ever since remained under Muhammadan domination. Antioch and Jerusalem were taken in the following year; and the Khalīf Omar himself journeyed to Palestine to receive in person from the Patriarch the submission of the last-named city. There also he is said to have laid the foundation of the famous mosque of Omar, which covers the rock that is believed to bear the mark of Muhammad's foot, imprinted on the hard surface as he started to return from Jerusalem to Mecca on his miraculous night journey.[1] In the east, the two great battles of Kādisīya on the Euphrates in 635 A.D., and Nahāwand in Persia six years afterwards, the latter followed by the taking of the capital Persepolis and flight of the king Yazdigird, laid all Persia at the feet of the Khalīf. Egypt was overrun and conquered in the same year.[2]

Omar was assassinated by a Persian slave, for some fancied wrong or refusal of redress, in the mosque at Medina, towards the close of the year 644 A.D. His reign had lasted for ten and a half years, and had been marked by great wisdom moderation and success.

His successor was Othmān, a man of a very

[1] See the complete story from Arabic authors in Koelle, p. 304 ff.; A. J. Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, ch. xii. According to Goldziher, the winged horse, Borak, is of Persian origin, see *Actes du premier Congrès International d'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 1900, pt. 1, p. 121. Others compare Borak with Heb. בָּרָק, and suppose that the horse is a poetical or fanciful impersonation of the lightning.

[2] See for the history especially A. J. Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, Oxford, 1902.

different character. Weak and injudicious, as ignorant of the art of ruling as of that of yielding, although pious and faithful in the discharge of that which he believed to be his duty, he appears to have been little more than a tool in the hands of ambitious members of the Quraish. A spirit of discontent spread rapidly in the provinces, not only amongst the numerous half-converted peoples, whose profession of Islām was a mere cloak for love of warfare and plunder, but with those also by whom the innovations and foreign practices that had crept in were in all sincerity regarded as proofs of a fatal degeneracy. The latter party consisted of bands of fanatics, present in greater or less numbers throughout the whole dominion of Islām, whose head quarters were to be found in the districts bordering on the Euphrates. Self-seeking and unreliable, their friendship and enmity were alike dangerous, as future rulers of Islām were to prove. A wide-spreading conspiracy was formed, the object of which was to secure the dethronement of the Khalīf, in order to instal a stronger or more pliant ruler in his place. The spirit of revolt was fostered by many of the leading men in the provincial cities. Formidable bands of conspirators made their appearance in Medina, with lists of grievances for which they demanded redress. Othmān put them off with promises of consideration and justice. They were persuaded to retire from the city; but quickly retraced their steps on the pretext that a messenger had been captured, bearing an order from the Khalīf to the provincial governors that the chief men of the conspiracy should be put to death immediately on their return home. The entire charge and complaint against Othmān was without doubt false, and a part of the plot. It served however

Othmān

to inflame the animosity of the common people, and gave an excuse for offering violence to the aged Khalīf, on whose abdication or death his enemies were fully determined. The palace in which he lived at Medina was besieged in regular form for several weeks, being guarded only by a few faithful followers. These were at length overcome or thrust aside, the walls stormed, and Othmān himself at the age of eighty-two slain in the courtyard, while engaged in reading in a copy of the Qur'ān, on the 17th of June, 656 A.D.

'Alī and Mu'āwiya.

At the time of the murder of Othmān, Mu'āwiya, the son of Abū Sufyān, the great Meccan chief and early opponent of Muhammad, was governor of Syria and Damascus in the name of the Khalīf. He refused to recognise as the latter's successor Alī, whom the inhabitants of Medina had elected in the room of Othmān. For some years, therefore, until the death of Ali, the Muhammadan empire was distracted by civil war between the Syrian adherents of Mu'āwiya, who represented the party of laxity and progress, and the men of Arabia and Chaldaea, who professed to uphold the stricter principles of early Islām, and who partly followed Ali and partly compelled him to do their bidding. The new Khalīf abandoned the turbulent city of Medina, and fixed his capital at Kūfa, on the west of the Euphrates, south of and not far from ancient Babylon, a more suitable and central spot for the control of a wide empire. The choice however proved unfortunate to him and to his descendants through the fickle and untrustworthy character of the men of the city. Its prestige and dignity therefore passed away with the death of Ali and the decline of the fortunes of his house.

From his new capital Ali advanced against Mu'āwiya with an army largely composed of fanatics, who cared nothing for his person, but all for what they held to be the principles and rules of the faith. The turning-point of the campaign that ensued was the battle fought in the summer of 657 A.D. at Siffīn, near the right bank of the Euphrates above its junction with the Khabūr, some four hundred miles north-west of Kūfa. Here the troops of Ali were on the point of winning a decisive victory, when their opponents adopted the device of fastening copies of the Qur'ān to their lances, shouting out that the Book of the Law should decide between them. The fanatics of Ali's army thereupon refused to fight against the sacred volume, and withdrew from the contest. An agreement was made that the claims of the rival leaders should be submitted to arbitration; and this by a shallow trick was so managed as to go in favour of Mu'āwiya.[1] Ali retired to his capital at Kūfa; and the arbitration remained without practical effect.

A few years later Ali was assassinated in the mosque at Kūfa, at the beginning of 661 A.D., by one of a band of three fanatics who had sworn to

[1] The chosen umpires, one from each side, met in the early part of 658 A.D. at Dūma, mid-way between the Gulf of Akaba and the head of the Persian Gulf. The details of the event are uncertain, and the accounts given not always consistent. It was arranged between the two commissioners that both claimants to the Khalīfate should be set aside, and a third impartial candidate chosen. Abū Mūsa accordingly, as spokesman for Ali, declared his leader deposed, and the throne vacant. 'Amru, following him, on the part of Mu'āwiya announced that as Ali was no longer Khalīf by the act of his own umpire, and Mu'āwiya therefore the only claimant in the field, he confirmed him in the position of Khalīf, and ordered that all the people should render him obedience. Muir, *Caliphate*, ch. xxxvii.

rid the Muslim world of its three tyrants, 'Alī, Mu'āwiya, and 'Amru the general who had won Egypt for Islām, had acted as arbitrator on the side of Mu'āwiya three years before, and who was regarded as his probable successor.[1] The plot against 'Amru and Mu'āwiya miscarried, and 'Alī alone fell.[2] He had been one of the first to believe in Muhammad, had faithfully stood by him through all the dark days at Mecca and the brighter experiences of Medina, then rendered loyal service to his successors, until himself called upon to assume the highest office. He was not however strong enough to control the harsh and hot spirits whom he found under him; nor is he free from the suspicion of complicity in the murder of Othmān. That it lay in his power to do more than he even attempted for the protection of the aged Khalīf is clear. In his later years also he certainly preferred his own ease to the labours and duties of an empire divided against itself between rival factions and interests. But Alī was more true to the simplicity and purity of the early faith than nine-tenths of the men who surrounded him, and filled his days with bitterness. In less troublous times he would have made a wise and successful ruler of the Muhammadan world.

Ali left two sons, Hasan and Husain, of whom the eldest, Hasan, was chosen by the people of Kūfa to succeed his father as Khalīf. It would seem however that he desired a life of indulgence, with the pleasures of the harem, rather than the

[1] On the character of 'Amr or 'Amru see A. J. Butler, *op. cit.*, p. 199 ff.; Muir, *Caliphate*, p. 305.

[2] The tomb of Ali is at Mashhad Ali, north of Kūfa. To all Shī'ahs the place is most sacred, and forms a much-frequented centre of pilgrimage. There is a description in Guy le Strange, *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, Cambridge, 1905, p. 76 ff.

troubles of sovereignty; and after a few months he abdicated in favour of Mu'āwiya, withdrawing to Medina, where he was poisoned eight years subsequently by one of his wives. Husain went to live at Mecca; whence in the Khalīfate of Yazīd, son and successor of Mu'āwiya, he was enticed by promises of support from the men of Kūfa in an attempt to throw off the Syrian yoke. Marching from Mecca with a small band of adherents, he found himself betrayed and disappointed of the expected help from Kūfa. And at Karbalā, west of the Euphrates, not far distant from Babylon, he and his company were finally surrounded by the horsemen of the Khalīf.

Hasan and Husain

The story of the death of Husain has often been told. The attack of his enemies began at dawn, and was sustained till past noon; when all his followers being scattered or slain, and Husain himself wounded, he sat down on the ground with his little son Abdullah on his knees. The child was at once killed by an arrow; and Husain, laying down the body, said, 'We come from God, and we return to Him. O God, give me strength to bear these misfortunes.' His foes then closed in upon him and slew him. It was the second great and premeditated murder of Islām; and the cruel death of the grandson of the Prophet on the plains of Karbalā has been the cause of the bitterest and most implacable schism that her history has known.[1] The head of Husain was cut off, and carried to the Khalīf's governor at Kūfa. The battle, or massacre, took place on the tenth of Muharram, the first

Death of Husain

[1] 'The "martyred Husain" is a watchword which has kept alive a spirit of hatred and of vengeance even to this day.' Sell, *Faith of Islām*.

month of the Muhammadan year, A.H. 61, equivalent to October 10, 680 A.D. A tomb or shrine was raised to his memory on the spot where he was slain, but this was destroyed at a later period in the middle of the ninth century, by the orthodox Khalīf Mutawakkil. It was soon restored and enlarged, only to be again ruined by fire at the beginning of the eleventh century. Rebuilt for a third time after a short period, the 'Mashhad Husain' is held in almost greater honour as a centre of pilgrimage than the tomb of his father.[1]

Husain is regarded as a martyr by the Shī'ah sect of the Muslims, who reverence him and his father with a passionate devotion. The memory of his name and fate is kept alive on the anniversary of his death by the yearly festival of the Muharram, with services and processions and lamentation.[2] His wife is said to have been the daughter of Yazdigird III, the last king of the royal house of Persia, and his descendants therefore established a twofold claim to the reverence of all Persians, uniting the divine right of the family of Ali to the national and political headship of the ancient royal house.

[1] For the history of the tomb at Karbalā see G. le Strange in *JRAS*, 1902, p. 68 f.; *Eastern Caliphate*, p. 78 f.

[2] It has been said more than once that in the death of Husain Islām, or at least the Shī'ah sect, endeavours to meet and satisfy the longing of the human heart for an example of self-sacrifice and an atonement for sin. Muhammad is reported to have foretold his martyrdom :—'He will die for the sake of my people.' Words of Husain also, uttered before he started on his last expedition, are handed down by tradition :—'How can I forget my people, seeing that I am about to offer myself for their sakes.' Cp. Sell, *Faith of Islām*[2], p. 94.

The Khalīfs who reigned at Damascus, fourteen in number, are known as Umayyads, from *Umayya*, the great-grandfather of Mu'āwiya. The dynasty lasted for nearly a century, until the year 750 A.D. At its close the Muhammadan arms had been carried in the west throughout North Africa and Spain, together with parts of Southern France, where the Arab conquest and infusion of Arab blood is still attested by many place and folk-names, and by the features of the population. While in the east Bokhara and Samarkand with the surrounding country had been brought into subjection, Afghānistān overrun, and the forces of the Khalīf had even crossed the Indus. North of Palestine and Syria no great progress had been made, or permanent conquest effected. Frequent invading expeditions, however, had entered and laid waste Armenia and Asia Minor, the nearest provinces had been definitely occupied, and Constantinople itself more than once besieged. The conquest of India and of Central and Western Africa was not achieved until a later date.

Umayyad Khalifs

It would seem that at no long interval after the death of Ali and the catastrophe of Karbalā intrigues were set on foot, which resulted in the overthrow of the Umayyad Dynasty, and the establishment in its place of that of the 'Abbāsids. The last decade of the seventh century was marked by more than one uprising, inspired by indignation at the murder of the Prophet's grandson, and desire for vengeance on his murderers. The new rulers derived their lineage and name from 'Abbās, a brother of Abū Tālib, and uncle of Muhammad. There were however at least two parties among

Party Intrigues

those who sought for power. The *Hāshimites* or *Hāshimiyya* espoused the cause of Abū Hāshim, the son of a half-brother of the murdered Husain; the *Imāmites* or *Imāmiyya* maintained that the right of succession lay only with the direct descendants of Ali, and therefore upheld the claims of Ali, the son of Husain. On the death of Abū Hāshim, poisoned according to the general belief by the Khalīf Sulaimān, his party transferred their allegiance to Muhammad, great grandson of Abbās, and father of Saffāh, the first Khalīf of the house of Abbās.[1] Thus the house of Ali was excluded from direct political power, but continued to hold a religious headship, the assertion of which became one of the chief doctrinal points which separated the two great sects of Islām.

The first of the Abbāsid Khalīfs, Saffāh,[2] held his court at Anbār, a small town on the east bank of the Euphrates, thirty or thirty-five miles north of Karbalā, and died there. His brother, Mansūr, who succeeded him, chose for his capital a site on the Tigris almost due east of Anbār, where he founded the great city of Baghdād, which with a brief interval[3] continued to be the busy and splendid centre of Abbāsid power until the fall of the dynasty

Abbāsid Khalīfs

[1] Muir, chap. lv.; E. G. Browne, *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, vol. i. p. 236 ff.

[2] Saffāh or aṣ-Ṣaffāḥ, 'the shedder of blood,' is a descriptive title rather than a proper name; see Browne, p. 237, and note; *JRAS.*, 1907, p. 660 ff.

[3] Sāmarrā, on the Tigris, higher up the river than Baghdād, was the capital for more than half a century, 836–892 B.C., from the Khalīfate of Mu'tasim to the end of the reign of Mu'tamid, who returned to Baghdād shortly before his death. Muir, p. 509; G. le Strange, *East. Caliphate*, p. 66 ff.

five centuries later. The most remarkable of its rulers, under whom the authority and magnificence of the Khalīfate reached their highest point, were Harūn-ar-Rashīd, who reigned from 786–809 A.D., and whose name is well known from the Arabian Nights, and Ma'mūn, the great free-thinker among the sovereigns of Islām. Literature flourished at Baghdād, and arts and sciences borrowed from the Greeks were diligently cultivated; and from a rude race of warriors, the followers of the faith of Muhammad became a polite and civilised as well as powerful nation.

Persian Influence

The change of capital therefore was significant of much more than a mere transference of the centre of authority from Syria to the banks of the Tigris. Henceforth Arabian influence declined, and as a controlling political force became extinct; while Persian influence took its place. The former stood for the old and narrow outlook of the desert tribe, for stern fanaticism, and for the yoke upon observance and thought of the rigid rule of Muhammad's day. Their war-cry was no innovation, the strict rule of the Qur'ān with its traditional interpretation and law. The Abbāsid movement on the other hand had won its way to success by Persian support, and its leaders throughout were animated by the Persian spirit. This influence culminated perhaps under the Vizierate of the great Barmecide family, father and sons, 786–803 A.D.[1] It was characterised by liberality of thought, an eager desire for learning, and a capacity for assimilating what was most worthy of the literature and achievements of other

[1] Browne, *op. cit.* i. p. 239 ff.

nations. With a generous and open mind there was associated a quick intelligence, and a love of speculation, which has ever made Persia the home of heretical opinions. Had their administrative and political ability corresponded to the breadth of their mental outlook the fortunes of Islām would long ago have been emancipated from the bonds of a strict legalism, and a traditional rule that in practice made no concession and admitted of no modification.[1]

Decline and Fall of the Abbāsid Empire

Externally however the empire was by no means so prosperous as its advance in literature and the arts might seem to imply. It set an example of luxury, and practised a freedom of philosophic and speculative thought, which its external resources were ultimately unable or unwilling to support. The provinces one by one fell away from the control of the central authority at Baghdād, the most distant being naturally the earliest to assert their liberty of action. In Spain the Abbāsids were never recognised, and a branch Umayyad Dynasty held independent rule from the very beginning at Cordova. North Africa, Egypt, Syria successively cut themselves off from the dominion of the Khalīf, his spiritual authority nevertheless being always acknowledged except in Morocco and Spain. A similar course of events ensued in the East, where the more remote provinces

[1] On the change of thought and feeling implied in the substitution of the Abbāsid for the Umayyad Dynasty, see especially I. Goldziher in *Actes du premier Congr. Intern. d'Hist. d. Religions*, Paris, 1900, pt. i. p. 122 ff.; Browne, *op. cit.*, i. pp. 247, 281 ff.; and for Baghdād under the Abb. Khalīfate, Guy le Strange in *JRAS*, 1899, p. 847 ff.; *id.*, *Baghdad under the Abb. Caliphate*; R. A. Nicholson, *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 255 ff.

of Persia, and the countries on the farther bank of the Oxus, became practically independent under Muhammadan governors, who themselves under favourable circumstances became the founders of strong and durable principalities. From the ninth and tenth centuries onwards bands of Turks and other savage mercenaries, originally introduced as bodyguards to the Khalīfs, more and more usurped all real power, the nominal rulers sinking into the position of mere puppets in the hands of all-powerful *viziers*. Later still, Mongol hordes poured down upon the empire from Central Asia, Baghdād was taken by their armies under Hulāgu in 1258 A.D., and the last of the Abbāsid Khalīfs died in prison.[1]

The Fātimid Khalīfs in Egypt were a branch of the same family of Abbās, who maintained a precarious position of independent authority in Egypt down to the year 1517 A.D. They claimed to be in the direct line of descent from 'Alī and Fātimah, the daughter of the Prophet[2]; and to have right therefore to the titles of Imām and Khalīf superior to that of the rulers of Baghdād. In that year the country was taken possession of by the Ottoman Sultān, Salīm I. The last sovereign descended from the tribe of the Quraish, who bore the title of Khalīf, was carried prisoner to Constantinople, and there compelled to hand over his rights and dignity to the conqueror. The Sultans of Turkey, therefore, can only rest their claim to the name and office of Khalīf, or supreme ruler of the Muhammadan world, on the right of the sword. According to the strict

[1] The story of his death taken from a Muhammadan writer is told in *JRAS*, 1900, p. 293 ff.

[2] The validity of the claim is doubtful; see E. G. Browne, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 398 f.

law of Islām, they are not and cannot be true successors of Muhammad, not being of the tribe of the Quraish.[1]

Muhammadan Conquest of India

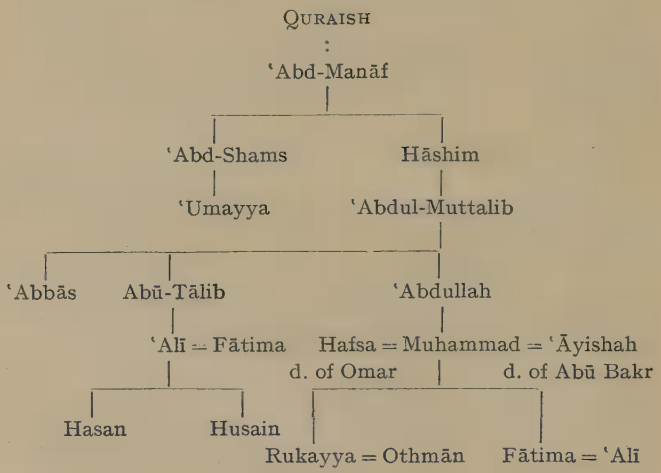
The subjugation of India was never seriously undertaken by the Muhammadans under the Khalīfate. As early however as the seventh and eighth centuries expeditions both by land and sea made their way to the countries lying on the Indus, and effected settlements that became more or less permanent. But the real founder of Musalmān dominion in India was Mahmūd of Ghazni; who at the beginning of the eleventh century invaded Kashmīr and the Panjāb, fixing his capital at Lahore, and opening the way to further advance. In the northern part of the peninsula his successors and descendants carried on the work which he had well begun, establishing at Delhi and throughout Bengal a number of dynasties and kingdoms, and pushing southwards along the sea-coast into the Deccan; there to repeat on a smaller scale the same process of adventurous conquest and creation of new Muhammadan states out of the ruin of older powers. The whole was consolidated, and brought gradually and for the most part under one rule, by the Mongol conquerors from the north; the first of whom, Bābar, entered India in 1525. The line of the Mughal emperors continued to rule,

[1] Cp. Sell, p. 104 ff.; Hughes, *s.v.* Khalīfah. In *JRAS*, 1901, p. 907 f., will be found extracts from a Muhammadan Law-Book on the necessary qualifications of a Khalīf. The most important conditions are that the holder of the office must be of the tribe of the Quraish, and must be in supreme control of the holy cities, Mecca and Medina. The office moreover being elective, the Fātimid ruler could not by any testament confer a right to the name or authority upon the Sultan or his successors.

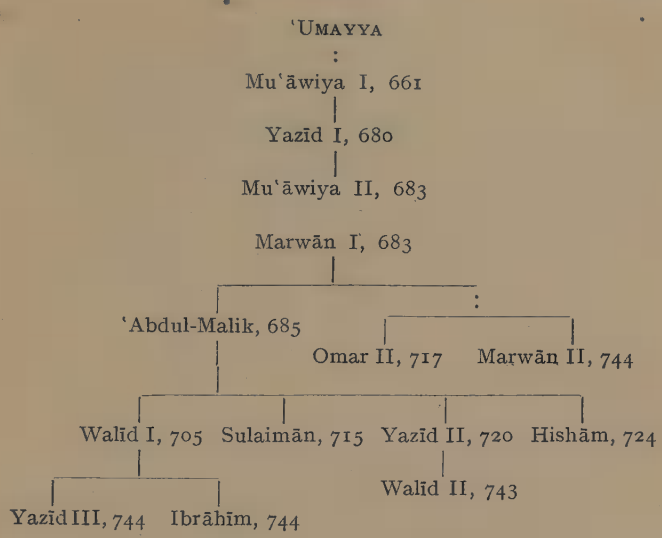
with ever-shrinking dominions, until 1858; when their authority, long nominal, was finally superseded by that of the Queen-Empress at the close of the Great Mutiny.

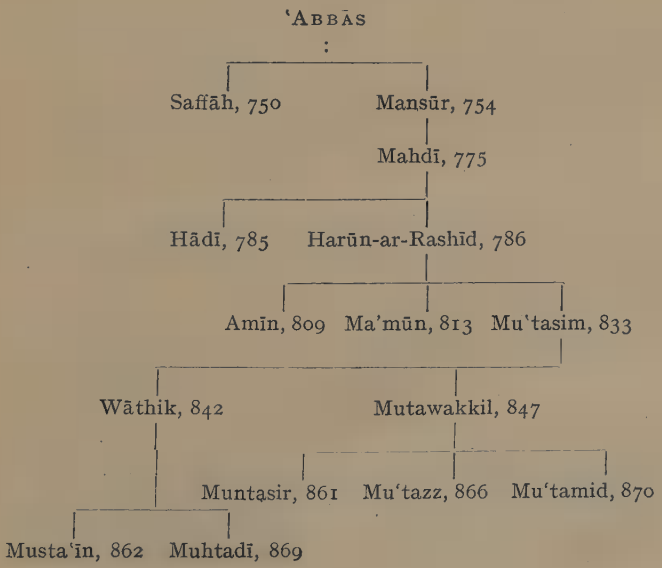
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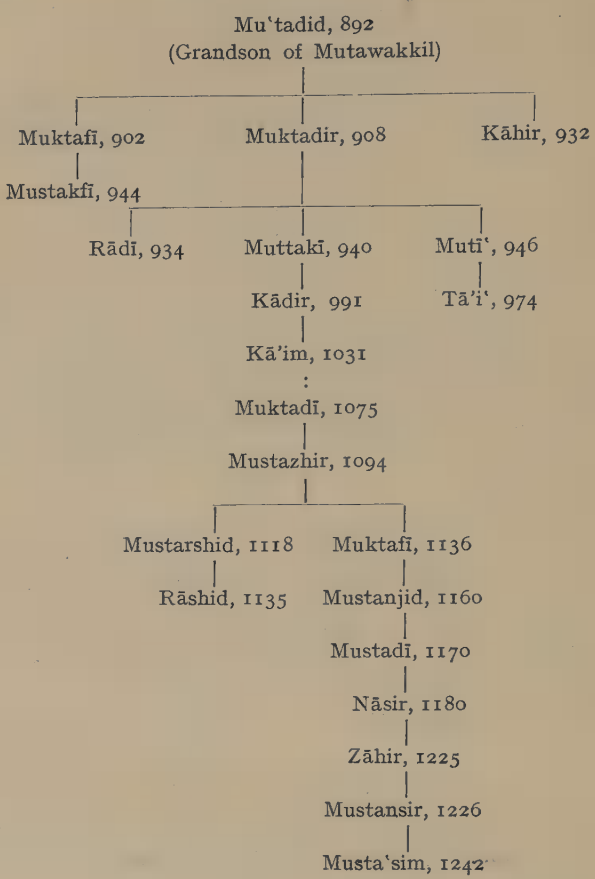
*** The connection by Muhammadan law is so close between Church and State, the temporal ruler and the spiritual head, that it has seemed worth while to add tables of the family of Muhammad himself, and of the dynasties of the Khalīfs. They are taken mainly from *The Mohammedan Dynasties* of Stanley Lane-Poole, London, 1894.[1]



[1] | signifies direct descent; : an interval of one or more generations. The number after a name is the date of accession A.D.


ʿUmayya
Muʿāwiya I, 661
Yazīd I, 680
Muʿāwiya II, 683
Marwān I, 683
ʿAbdul-Malik, 685
Omar II, 717
Marwān II, 744
Walīd I, 705
Sulaimān, 715
Yazīd II, 720
Hishām, 724
Walīd II, 743
Yazīd III, 744
Ibrāhīm, 744


ʿAbbās
Saffāh, 750
Mansūr, 754
Mahdī, 775
Hādī, 785
Harūn-ar-Rashīd, 786
Amīn, 809
Maʾmūn, 813
Muʿtasim, 833
Wāthik, 842
Mutawakkil, 847
Muntaṣir, 861
Muʿtazz, 866
Muʿtamid, 870
Mustaʿīn, 862
Muhtadī, 869



THE QUR'ĀN

THE great work of Muhammad's lifetime, apart although of course inseparable from his public activities, was the Qur'ān, the book in which are contained his teaching and directions on all matters

of faith and practice. In clearness and simplicity of arrangement therefore, it might have been expected to exhibit a distinct superiority over the Old and New Testaments, the several parts of which were composed by different authors at distant intervals, and in many instances not committed to writing until after a considerable time. The Qur'ān, on the contrary, is the fruit of the workings of one single mind, and even if little or nothing were actually written during the lifetime of Muhammad its chapters were gathered from the memories and lips of those who had themselves listened to his words. There can be little doubt that this is in accordance with Muhammad's own wish; and that he of set purpose refrained from the stereotyped and binding form of a written law, preferring to retain the power of modifying what had already been given. His utterances nevertheless as collected and preserved by his followers present great difficulties both of order and interpretation. The language is forcible, and often rises to dignity and eloquence. But the meaning nevertheless is frequently obscure, and words seem to be used with strange and unusual connotations.[1]

By orthodox Musalmāns the Qur'ān is believed to be uncreated and eternal, of incomparable excellence and beauty, the unapproachable pattern

[1] It has been remarked as strange that more than once Muhammad explicitly claims for his sayings that they are in simple plain Arabic; as though to his contemporaries also the style and diction had presented unlooked-for possibilities of misapprehension. The phrase is, however, only found in the later sūras:—'The faithful spirit has descended therein upon thine heart, that thou mightest become a warner, in the plain Arabic tongue,' xxvi. 193–5; cp. xii. 2, 'Verily we have sent it down an Arabic Qur'ān, that ye may understand it'; xli. 2, xlii. 5, *al.* Cp. Hirschfeld, p. 6.

The Qur'ān Eternal and Uncreated

for all time of what an inspired composition should be. Abū Hanīfah, one of the most famous and authoritative expounders of Muhammadan law, says concerning it, 'The Qur'ān is the word of God, and is His inspired word and revelation. It is a necessary attribute of God. It is not God, but still it is inseparable from God. It is written in a volume, it is read in a language, it is remembered in the heart, and its letters and its vowel-points and its writing are all created, for these are the works of man; but God's word is uncreated. Its words, its writing, its letters, and its verses are for the necessities of man, for its meaning is arrived at by their use; but the word of God is fixed in the essence of God, and he who says that the word of God is created is an infidel.'

Ibn Khaldun's words also are undoubtedly representative of orthodox Muhammadan belief:—'Know that the greatest, the most sublime and best accredited miracle is the noble Qur'ān which was revealed to our Prophet. . . . The Qur'ān is inspiration given exclusively to Muhammad, and is at the same time a miracle, bringing its own credentials, and requiring no external verification as is the case with miracles performed by other prophets. . . . The Qur'ān is of all divine books the only one communicated to a prophet by word of mouth . . . in contrast to the Torāh, the Injīl, and other heavenly books, which their prophetic authors received in the form of ideas. Then when returning into the state of ordinary life they expressed these ideas in common language, and therefore could not claim any supernatural power. Our Prophet, like others, received ideas from Allah . . . but he alone rendered Allah's words. . . . No greater miracle was vouchsafed to our Prophet than the Qur'ān. . . . The Qur'ān furnishes irresistible evidence of the superiority of our Prophet over others.'[1]

[1] *Prolegomena*, ed. Quatremére, quoted in Hirschfeld, p. 1.

This question of the nature of the Qur'ān, its supposed eternity and uncreated character, was at one period in the history of Islām most keenly debated between the orthodox doctors and the free-thinkers of the day, who claimed the right of testing even the inspired word in the light of reason and experience.

Style

To a European, approaching the Qur'ān for the first time through the medium of a translation, the book appears beyond measure wearisome and dull; and his marvel is excited that a work so full of platitudes and repetitions, of seemingly idle tales and legends, in parts at least hardly rising above the commonplace and prosaic, should have stirred the admiration and commanded the reverence of the millions of Musalmāns down to the present day. The Qur'ān has been and is read and studied as no other book, with the possible exception of the Christian Scriptures, has ever been. Some scholars would refuse to make an exception even of the New Testament. And an explanation seems demanded of an impression so apparently inconsistent with the history of the book and the transcendent influence which it has exercised on so many lives. In deprecation therefore of a judgement which certainly errs in the direction of severity, it may perhaps be said that scarcely any other work suffers so much in translation. It is written in Arabic,—a language that lends itself to high-flown sentiment, to discursiveness and repetition,—and for an Eastern people, with whom colouring and form are of at least equal concern with substance or depth of thought. It is moreover composed throughout in a kind of rhythmical prose,[1] which, although

[1] *Saj'un*; *e.g.* sūr. lxxxii., of which the first fourteen verses consist each of three words only, and end in the syllable *-at*, preceded in

it fetters somewhat and limits the writer, yet possesses a real dignity and beauty of its own, which it is beyond the power of any translation to reproduce. On a smaller scale similar rhythmical effects are met with in many of the Hebrew Psalms, and in passages from the prophets; or again in a somewhat different manner in Anglo-Saxon alliterative poetry. Nothing exists in the Qur'ān approaching to metre, or the measured succession of accented and unaccented sounds. But the final syllables of a clause, a sentence, or a verse are so contrived as to be identical both in the vowels and in the consonants; with the result that the voice of the reader or reciter dwells at each pause or sub-pause upon the same combination of sounds, producing an impression of regularity and solemn dignity unattainable perhaps by any but an Oriental. The difficulties also of an intelligent appreciation of the work are enhanced by the circumstance that, as ordinarily printed, the chapters are not arranged in chronological order, or indeed on any principle that would help to make clear their meaning. Most European scholars however who have had the perseverance and courage to essay the consecutive reading of the Qur'ān for a second or third time have described the impression made upon themselves as one of increasing force and persistence. Nor is a European always, perhaps he is very rarely, a competent judge of what would be likely to favourably influence or impress an Oriental mind.

The name Qur'ān is derived from the Arabic verb *qara'a*, to read, Heb. קָרָא, and therefore signifies that which is or should be read. Compare the Hebrew noun מִקְרָא in Neh. viii. 8, translated in our English

nearly all instances by a liquid, *r* or *l*. See Hirschfeld, *New Researches*, p. 10 f.

version the 'reading.' The book is believed to have been sent down by God complete to the lowest heaven on the *Laylatu'l Qadr*, or 'night of power' the twenty-seventh of the sacred month Ramadhān, the month of the great fast[1]; and to have been thence communicated to Muhammad in detail from time to time by the angel Gabriel, as occasion required.[2] It follows therefore that not only the teaching and the substance, but the very form and letters of the text are inspired, that its words are the actual words of God Himself.

Name and Inspiration

A distinction is usually made between the mode and degree of inspiration possessed by the Prophet when delivering the Qur'ān, and that which he enjoyed at other times. The former is *wahī*; and Muhammad was then a mere passive instrument or channel, through whom the dictated words of God were made known. The latter is *ilhām*, and the possession of it is conceded by Musalmāns to the prophets who preceded Muhammad. In their case the substance of the teaching only is from God, the form in which it is delivered is due to the moulding and character of the man through whom the communication is sent.

In the Qur'ān itself therefore there is no place for, and no possibility of a human element. The work is perfect, all-sufficient, and wholly divine. It is also, according to the decisions of the orthodox

[1] Sūr. xcvii. The three preceding revelations, to Abraham Moses and Jesus Christ, were also communicated in the same month, on the first sixth and thirteenth of the month respectively.

[2] Sūra ii. 91 :—'Verily he (Gabriel) caused it to descend on thy heart by the permission of God, confirming that which was before revealed, a direction and glad tidings to the believers'; cp. xxv. 34. The conception of the intermediary ministry of Gabriel was apparently derived from the Jews.

doctors, uncreated and eternal. This last view, however, appears to date not from the time of Muhammad himself, but from the second or third century after the Hijrah, and to have been due to the exigencies of theological controversy.

Delivery and Preservation

The precepts and chapters of the Qur'ān were orally delivered by Muhammad at intervals in the course of his ministry both at Mecca and Medina. At first it would seem that no special pains were taken, either by the Prophet himself or his followers, to record these utterances. Muhammad indeed, so far as we know, never actually committed anything to writing. And it has even been maintained, although on no sufficient grounds, that he was wholly illiterate.[1] After a time however his disciples adopted the practice of writing down at least some of the sayings of their leader, instead of trusting wholly to memory. The result was that after the death of Muhammad there were found among the Companions, or earliest adherents of the Prophet, not only men who knew by heart the entire Qur'ān, but also some who were in possession of chapters or extracts in a written form. It was not long, however, before the danger of a total loss or dispersion of the sacred text forced itself upon the attention of the responsible heads of the community; when, owing to the numerous battles in which the Muhammadans were engaged, many of these Companions and Reciters of the Qur'ān were slain, and the need became urgent for a

[1] The profession of illiteracy seems to have been made deliberately, either by the Prophet himself or his immediate followers, in order to enhance the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān; cp. the denial of the character of a poet or *kāhin* in sūr. lxix. 41 f. See Hirschfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 12 f.

mode of preservation less precarious than an oral recollection which lived in the midst of the dangers of war.

The initiative in an endeavour to meet the danger appears to have been taken by Omar; who urged upon the Khalif Abu Bakr the importance of making a collection, and issuing an authoritative edition of all the known utterances of the Prophet. The work was entrusted to Zaid ibn Thābit, a native of Medina, who had been Muhammad's favourite amanuensis. He accordingly gathered together the scattered chapters of the Qur'ān 'from date-leaves, and tablets of white stone, and from the breasts of men'; and the Qur'ān, as it exists to-day, is the fruit of his efforts. Unfortunately the chapters thus collected were not arranged in chronological order, but apparently on a rough principle of length, the longest being placed first and the shorter at the end. Since the brief sayings were, generally speaking, the earliest in point of date, it results from this that the Qur'ān would be more intelligible, as some one has said, if it were read backwards. Probably it would have been found impossible at that time to determine with precision the order in which the various discourses were delivered, had the attempt been made. Nor is there any evidence that the actual division into chapters, with their appropriate headings, was made by Muhammad himself, and was not rather a mere accident of the compilation. In some instances also it appears certain that the utterances belonging to different periods of his life have been strung together; and on the other hand words and passages have become separated which were originally spoken on one and the same occasion.

Into this first collection or recension differences

of reading soon began to find their way. The number of these variations again excited alarm, and by the reign of the Khalīf Othmān they had so increased that a fresh revision became necessary. Othmān charged Zaid a second time with the task, associating with him three members of the Quraish, to whom he was to defer in all cases of dispute as to reading or pronunciation; the object of this regulation apparently being to secure that the Qur'ān should be read only in the pure dialect of Mecca. According to the tradition Muhammad at first allowed the Qur'ān to be recited in seven dialects. Afterwards however the permission was withdrawn, and the true and correct reading limited to the speech of his own tribe.[1] When the revision was complete, all other copies were by command of the Khalīf destroyed, and thus one authorised text was established for the whole of Islām. Four standard copies were written out, and placed in the four principal towns of Medina, Damascus, Kūfa, and Basrah; and from these all existing copies, without exception, are derived.

Second Recension

For the preservation and accurate transmission of the text elaborate provision was made. An intricate science of writing and copying the Qur'ān came into existence, to which are due the maintenance of the text intact and its safe keeping, free from any but the most insignificant various readings, during nearly thirteen centuries. There is no good

[1] Sell, *Faith of Islām*, p. 53 f.; Hirschfeld, p. 12. The 'readings' or 'dialects' were perhaps little more than different modes of pronunciation, due to the fact that the Arabic text was written without vowels. The universal *written* character of the Chinese offers a parallel instance, although of course on a wider and more comprehensive scale.

reason to doubt that we possess the text of the Qur'ān to-day practically in the form in which it was delivered by Muhammad. The Shī'ahs indeed accuse the orthodox Sunnīs of having suppressed verses favourable to the claims of Ali.[1] But it seems clear that had such verses really existed, and formed a recognised part of the Qur'ān, their omission from Othmān's text could not fail to have been detected by some one or other of the numerous partisans of Ali then living.

The Qur'ān then, as it has come into our hands, and as it was finally settled in the reign of the third Khalīf, consists of one hundred and fourteen chapters, technically called *sūras*,[2] of very various lengths. Many of these *sūras* are composite, that is to say belong in part to different periods of the Prophet's life. Each chapter is named from its opening letters or words, or from some

Form and Contents

[1] *e.g.*, 'Ali is of the number of the pious; we shall give him his right in the day of judgement; we shall not pass over those who wish to deceive him. We have honoured him above all this family. He and his family are very patient. Their enemy (*i.e.* Mu'āwiya) is the chief of sinners.' Cp. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 12 f.

[2] Late Hebrew שׁוּרָה, a row or series; cp. שׁוּרָה, Isa. xxviii. 25. So Nöldeke, and most writers. Hirschfeld believes that סורה is rather a corruption or misreading of סדרה, סדר = order, rank, Job x. 22. *New Researches*, pp. 2 note, 13. The Muhammadans themselves do not cite the Qur'ān by chapter and verse, but by *juz'* and *rukū'*. The former word denotes a 'division,' 'section,' of which there are thirty in the Qur'ān, for daily reading during the month. The equivalent Persian term is *sīpārah*. *Rukū'* is literally 'prostration,' from the verb *raka'a*, to bow down, prostrate oneself, and is applied to the portion of text recited between two acts of prostration in prayer. Of these sub-divisions there are in all five hundred and fifty-seven. Cp. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 70 f.; Hughes, *ss.vv.* and pp. 492a, 517.

prominent topic or event treated of therein ; as was the case for instance with the Hebrew names of the books of the Pentateuch. Thus there is found the sūra of Women (4th), of Prophets (21st), or of the Resurrection (75th). All the sūras moreover, with the exception of the ninth, that of Repentance, are introduced by the formula, ' In the name of God the compassionate the merciful.' Throughout God Himself is represented as the speaker ; or rather Gabriel, as conveying the messages and commands of God. The same monotonous rhythmical style also is everywhere maintained, whether the theme be matters of moral and spiritual obligation, or the most prosaic details of what passes for history. The more prolix sūras belong generally to the later period of Muhammad's life ; and an arrangement by length, beginning with the shortest chapters, would roughly correspond with the chronological order of delivery. Attempts at such an arrangement have been made by Muslim writers themselves. Jalālu'd-Dīn, a Muhammadan doctor, and a writer of great and deserved repute, who lived about two and a half centuries after the Hijrah and composed a commentary on the Qur'ān, elaborated a scheme which has been in its main features and disposition approved by European scholars. He assigns the first place in point of date to the 96th sūra, that of Congealed Blood. Last in the order is the sūra of Repentance. The arrangement adopted by Th. Nöldeke in his *Geschichte d. Qurâns* is generally considered to be the most satisfactory ; and is followed on the whole by J. M. Rodwell in his English translation. It is only on broad lines however that the order can be considered to have been determined. The details are often very uncertain.

It is not in general difficult to distinguish on

internal evidence the sūras delivered at Medina from those of earlier date. For in this town the position of Muhammad was more assured than at Mecca. He was now the head of an acknowledged party, charged with the duty of providing for them legislation and instruction, as well as of rebutting the accusations and calumnies to which he and they were alike exposed. This difference of position is reflected in his utterances. At Mecca he is the indignant fiery preacher, overflowing with wrath against his idolatrous opponents, and threatening them with all manner of calamity and evil because of their refusal to believe in him as the heaven-sent teacher, the apostle of God. At Medina, with few and slight exceptions, he is the calm legislator, securely occupying a position already won and intent only on making the best use of his victory. The later sūras besides being longer are quieter in tone, seem to be less spontaneous, more laboured and artificial, and concern themselves to a greater degree with abstract theological questions and with the enactment of ceremonial and civil laws. Appeals to and denunciations of the Jews are frequent, while references to idolatry and the Quraish occur but seldom. Historical notices also are found, which serve to date within comparatively narrow limits the portions or chapters in which they stand. On the whole there is little dispute as to the parts of the Qur'ān revealed at Medina; and twenty chapters, including all the longest, are usually assigned to this period.

Medina Sūras

In the Meccan sūras also a not inconsiderable advance may be traced both in style and subject-matter. Some approximate in character to the passages and discourses spoken at Medina, and are

probably the latest in point of time, dating from no long period before the Hijrah. Others, a smaller class, are characterised by a vigour and directness, a heartiness of conviction and an enthusiasm, which seem to mark them out as the earliest deliverances of the Prophet. These are usually brief and pointed. Lying between them is a third and more comprehensive and varied division, belonging to the central period of his ministry at Mecca, less vigorous in style, and with a larger element of dogma and instruction; introducing also for the first time stories derived from Jewish and other sources.

Meccan Sūras

There would thus be four classes or orders of sūras, the limits of which are in general sufficiently defined. Sir William Muir and others have endeavoured to establish a narrower and more detailed classification; but in this respect no very decisive or generally accepted results have been attained. Many problems still await solution. Some tentative arrangement however is essential to a right understanding of the history and text of the Qur'ān. The author named distinguishes six periods, and regards some of the chapters at least as having been delivered before Muhammad received his definite call, as recorded in the 96th sūra. This therefore would not be first in time, but was preceded by some eighteen others, composed before Muhammad definitely conceived of himself as having a mission to his people. The following is a brief statement of the classification adopted :—

Classification of Sūras

(1) Eighteen sūras were composed before the formal call to the office and work of a prophet. These are short poetical pieces, setting forth moral

and religious truth; and their precise order amongst themselves is uncertain. Chapter ciii., the 'sūra of the Afternoon,' is set down as absolutely the first :—

By the declining day I swear!
Verily, man is in the way of ruin;
Excepting such as possess faith,
And do the things which are right,
And stir up one another unto truth and steadfastness.[1]

The most important however of these and the best known, although at the same time among the most uncertain in date, is the opening sūra of the Qur'ān called *Al-Fātihah*, a confession of faith recited by the pious Muhammadan many times a day, which forms a part of every order of public worship :—

Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds! The Compassionate, the Merciful! The King of the day of Judgement! Thee do we serve, and unto Thee do we cry for help. Lead us in the straight path; the path of those unto whom Thou art gracious; not of those against whom Thou art wroth, nor of those who go astray.

The two last phrases are said to have reference to Jews and Christians respectively.

Other examples are sūra xcv., the 'sūra of the Fig' :—

I swear by the Fig tree and the Olive,
By Mount Sinai, and by this land inviolate!
Verily We made Man of the choicest creation,
Then we rendered him the lowest of the low;—
Excepting such as believe and work righteousness;
Unto them shall be given a reward that fadeth not away.

[1] I quote generally Sir W. Muir's own renderings, which are often paraphrases rather than translations. But they have the advantage over a literal translation of vigour and picturesqueness; and convey fairly adequately the force and meaning of the original.

Then, after this, what shall make thee deny the Day of reckoning?
What! is not God the justest of all Judges?

Or sūra xciii., the 'sūra of the Rising Sun':—

By the rising sunshine!
By the night when it darkeneth!
Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee, neither hath He been displeased.
The future shall surely be better unto thee than the past.
Thy Lord shall shortly dispense unto thee a gift; and thou shalt be satisfied.
What! did He not find thee an orphan, and give thee a home;
Found thee astray, and guided thee aright?
Now therefore as touching the orphan, oppress him not;
And as touching him that asketh of thee, repulse him not;
And as touching the favours of thy Lord, rehearse them.

(2) The second class comprises four sūras only, which seem to belong to the time of the Prophet's call. To two of these, the 96th and 74th, reference has already been made. The 96th sūra is acknowledged to be of composite origin, only the earlier verses dating from this period. The other two are the 112th, the chapter of Unity, the reward for reading which Muhammad declared to be equal to that for reading a third of the Qur'ān[1]; and the 111th, a denunciation of Abū Lahab, 'father of flame,' and his wife, who had mocked the Prophet at Mecca.

Say:—He is God alone; God the Eternal. He begetteth not, and is not begotten. And there is none like unto Him.

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[1] 'One day the Prophet said to his companions, "What! have you not the power to read one-third of the Qur'ān in one night?" They replied, "It is very difficult to do so." His Excellency then said, "Very well, read the Sūratu'l-Ikhlās 112th); the reward for so doing is equal to that for reading one-third of the Qur'ān."' Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 260, note.

(3) Nineteen sūras compose the third division, revealed during the first five years of the Prophet's work after his call, up to the time of the emigration to Abyssinia. These are mainly doctrinal and descriptive, giving accounts of paradise and hell and of the resurrection, with declarations of hostility to the Quraish and reproofs of their idolatry. To this period belongs the sūratu'l Qadr, or 'sūra of Power,' chap. xcvii., referring to the descent of the Qur'ān :—

> Verily We sent it down on the Night of Power. And what shall cause thee to know what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. The angels and the spirits descend therein by the command of their Lord to execute every decree. It is peace until the rising of the morn.

As an example of another form of teaching may be quoted the 75th sūra, the 'sūra of the Resurrection' :—

> It is not that I swear by the day of the Resurrection,
> Or that I swear by the self-accusing soul!
> Doth man think that We shall not gather together his bones?
> Yea, the smallest bones of his fingers We are able to replace.
> But man chooseth to deny what is before him.
> He asketh, When will be the day of the Resurrection?
> Yea, when the sight is dazzled, and the moon darkened;
> And the sun and the moon meet together;
> On that day man shall say, Where is a place of refuge?
> But in vain—there is no escape.
> With thy Lord on that day is the sure asylum.
> Man shall be told on that day of all that he hath done first and last;
> Yea, a man shall be witness against himself.
> And if he put forth his plea, it shall not be accepted.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> On that day shall faces be bright, looking unto their Lord:
> And on that day shall faces be dismal;
> As if they thought that calamity should befall them.

But when the soul shall come up into the throat,
And it is said, Who hath a charm to recover him?
And when he thinketh that his time is come,
And one leg is stretched out upon the other,
Unto thy Lord on that day shall he be driven.
Yea, he did not confide, and did not pray;
And verily he held the truth for a lie, and turned away;
Then he departed to his people with proud step.
It (the day) is nearer to thee, and nearer.
Then is it nearer to thee, and nearer.
Doth man imagine that he shall be left supreme?
Was he not an embryo that burst forth?
Then he became congealed blood; and He formed him, and fashioned him,
And made of him the pair, male and female.
Is He not of power sufficient to raise the dead?

(4) A collection of twenty-two sūras covers the period up to the tenth year of Muhammad's ministry, or from 614–15 A.D. to 620 A.D. Here for the first time are found narratives and legends derived from native Arab, or more frequently Jewish sources, as for instance that of Moses and Pharaoh in sūra xxvi., and many others:—

Pharaoh said unto Moses, 'Verily if thou take any god beside me, I will make thee one of those who are imprisoned.' Moses said, 'What if I come to thee with a convincing miracle?' He answered, 'Produce it then, if thou art of those who deal truly.' So he cast down his rod, and behold it became an evident serpent; and he drew out his hand, and behold it appeared white to the spectators. Pharaoh said to the princes around him, 'Verily this man is a cunning magician; he is striving to expel you from your land by his magic; what then do you advise?' They answered, 'Detain him and his brother, and send through the cities messengers to bring to thee every cunning magician.' So the magicians were assembled at the set time, on an appointed day. And it was said to the people, 'Lo, ye are assembled together; perchance we may follow the magicians, if they are successful.' And when the magicians were assembled, they said unto Pharaoh, 'Shall we indeed have a reward, if we are successful

He answered, 'Yea; and verily ye shall be of those who draw near to me.' Moses said to them, 'Cast down what ye purpose to cast down.' And they cast down their cords and their rods, and said, 'By the might of Pharaoh verily we shall be successful.' And Moses cast down his rod, and it swallowed up that with which they had deceived. So the magicians cast themselves down worshipping. They said, 'We believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Moses and Aaron.'

(5) Thirty-one sūras belong to the period from the tenth year to the time of the Flight to Medina. Distorted records from the gospels occur, rules are given for the observance of the rites of pilgrimage, and various doctrines laid down and elaborated. The chapters are longer, and in many instances apparently contain passages inserted from other and later revelations. The teaching with reference to paradise and the resurrection, etc., is repeated and emphasized. The attributes of God are set forth, and idolaters again warned of the consequences of their sin. The following is the opening of chapter xix., the 'sūra of Mary':—

A Commemoration of the mercy of the Lord to His servant Zacharias. When he called upon his Lord with a secret invocation, he said, 'O Lord, as for me, my bones are decrepid, and my head white with hoar hair; and I have never prayed unto Thee, O Lord! unheard. Verily, I fear my kinsmen after me; and my wife is barren. Wherefore grant unto me from Thyself a successor, who shall be my heir, and an heir of the family of Jacob; and make him, O Lord! well-pleasing.' 'O Zacharias! We bring thee good tidings of a son, whose name shall be John; We have not made any to be called by that name before.' He said, 'O Lord! whence shall there be a son unto me, since my wife is barren, and I truly have reached the imbecility of old age?' The Angel said, 'So shall it be. Thus saith thy Lord,—It is easy unto Me; for verily I created thee heretofore when thou wast nothing.' He said, 'Lord, give me a sign.' The Angel said, 'This is thy sign. Thou

shalt not speak unto any for three nights, though sound in health.' And he went forth unto his people from the chamber, and he motioned unto them that they should praise God morning and evening.

(6) There are, finally, twenty sūras that are assigned to the period of Muhammad's life at Medina. These are mainly concerned with theological questions and matters of organisation, mingled with appeals to and denunciations of the Jews, and repetition of his earlier teaching on paradise and hell, the Qur'ān, and similar subjects. The sūras are long, and in most cases wearisome through reiterations. The examples that follow, which might easily be multiplied, will give a better idea than a mere description of the character and style of these chapters. The following is from sūra ii., the 'sūra of the Cow':—

O children of Israel! remember My favour wherewith I showed favour upon you, and be true to your covenant with Me; I will be true to My covenant with you; Me therefore, revere Me; and believe in that which I have sent down confirming your Scripture, and be not the first to disbelieve it, neither for a mean price barter My signs; Me therefore, fear ye Me.

And cloak not the truth with falsehood, and hide not the truth when ye know it:

And observe prayer and give alms, and bow down with those who bow.

Will ye enjoin what is right upon others, and though ye read the Book forget your own souls? will ye not then understand?

And seek help with patience and prayer; and a hard duty indeed is this, but not to the humble,

Who bear in mind that they must meet their Lord, and that unto Him shall they return.

O children of Israel! remember My favour wherewith I showed favour upon you; and that to you above all creatures have I been bounteous.

And fear ye a day in which a soul shall not satisfy for a soul at all, nor shall any intercession be accepted from them, nor shall any ransom be taken, neither shall they be helped.

. . . . . .

God! there is no God but He: the Living, the Eternal. Slumber doth not overtake Him, neither sleep. To Him belongeth all that is in the heavens and in the earth. Who is he that shall intercede before Him, excepting by His permission? He knoweth that which is before them, and that which is behind them, and they shall not comprehend anything of His knowledge, saving in so far as He pleaseth. His throne stretcheth over heaven and earth, and the protection of them both is no burden unto Him. He is the lofty and the great.

From sūra xxiv., the 'sūra of Light':—

God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His light is as the niche wherein is a lamp enclosed in glass, the glass of a refulgent star. From a blessed tree is it lighted, an olive neither of the east nor of the west. Its oil is near unto giving light, even if the fire toucheth it not. It is light upon light. God guideth towards His light whom He pleases.

The fifth chapter, the 'sūra of the Table,' contains what has been supposed to be a reference to the Christian Sacrament of the Lord's Supper:—

When the Apostles of Jesus said, 'O Jesus, son of Mary! Is thy Lord able to send down to us a Table from heaven?' He said, 'Fear God, if ye are believers.' They said, 'We desire to eat therefrom, and to have our hearts assured, and to know that Thou hast indeed spoken unto us the truth, and to become witnesses thereof.' Then said Jesus, son of Mary, 'O God our Lord! send down to us a Table from heaven, that it may become a festival to us, to the first of us and to the last of us, and a sign from Thee; and do Thou nourish us, for Thou art the best of nourishers.' God said, 'Verily I will send it down unto you; but whoever among you after that shall disbelieve, surely I will chastise him with a chastisement, wherewith I will not chastise any other creature.'

In the same sūra is an account of the relation in which Muhammad, at one time at least, believed the Qur'ān to stand to earlier divine revelations :—

> Verily We have sent down the Law, wherein are guidance and light. By it did the prophets who followed the truth [1] judge the Jews ; the doctors and the priests also, in accordance with that with which they were entrusted of the book of God ; and they were witnesses thereof. Wherefore fear not men, but fear Me ; and barter not My signs for a small price. And whoso doth not judge by that which God hath sent down, verily they are the unbelievers. . . . And in their footsteps We caused Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow, confirming the Law which was before him. And We gave him the gospel ; therein is guidance and light, confirming also the Law which was before it,—a guidance and warning to the pious,—and that the people of the gospel may judge according to that which God hath sent down therein. And whoso will not judge according to that which God hath sent down, verily they are the disobedient ones. And We have sent down to thee the Book (*i.e.* the Qur'ān) in truth, confirming and bearing witness to the book which was before it. Judge then between them according to that which God hath sent down, and follow not their lusts, away from the truth which has come to you. Verily to all of you have We given a law and a way.

Two brief illustrations may be given in conclusion of the moral and ethical precepts of the Qur'ān. The first is from the sūra just quoted :—

> O ye who believe ! verily wine, and games of chance, and images, and divining-arrows, are an abomination from the work of Satan. Shun them therefore, that ye may prosper. Verily Satan striveth that he may sow among you enmity and hatred in the wine and games of chance, and turn you away from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will ye not then refrain ? And obey God, and obey the Apostle ; and take heed. Verily if ye turn back, then know that our Apostle's duty is to give a plain warning.

In sūra iv., the 'sūra of Women,' is contained

[1] Lit. who *Islamized*.

the following enactment on the slaying, accidental or otherwise, of a fellow Muslim :—

A believer killeth not a believer except by error ; and whoso killeth a believer by error, then is he bound to set free a believing slave ; and the ransom is to be paid to his people, unless they spend it in alms. If then he be of a people hostile to you, and be a believer, then is he (the slayer) bound to set free a believing slave ; but if he be of a people between whom and you there is an alliance, then the ransom is to be paid to his people, and he is bound to set free a believing slave. And for him that cannot find the means (there is prescribed) a fast of two consecutive months, a penance from God ; and God is wise, all-knowing. And whoso kills a believer of set purpose, his recompense is hell ; for ever shall he abide therein. And God is wroth with him, and doth curse him, and prepareth for him a sore punishment.

A more illuminating and helpful classification is to be found on the lines followed by Dr. H. Hirschfeld in his *New Researches into the Composition and Exegesis of the Qoran*, London, 1902, a work that contains much that is suggestive and of the utmost value for the right understanding of Muhammad's character and work. Having regard in the first instance to their internal significance and bearing, Dr. Hirschfeld adopts a fivefold division of the revelations into confirmatory, doctrinal or declamatory, historical or narrative, descriptive, and legislative. The analysis is of course only general, and the classes, especially the latest, tend to overlap one another. (1) The earliest sūras however reiterate and confirm the claims of the Prophet, defining his own position as a heaven-sent Messenger. They are sūr. 68, 73. 1–14, 74, 87, 93 f., 112, and others or parts of others.[1] It should be said that Dr. Hirschfeld goes farther than most of his predecessors in regarding the chapters as composite, made up of portions delivered at different times and under varying circumstances. (2) In the second division are formulated the greater part of the distinctive doctrines of the Qur'ān, of paradise and hell, predestination, etc.[2] It is here that Muhammad makes the most frequent reference to the earlier prophets, to whom, and especially to Moses, he compares

[1] p. 34 ff.

[2] See *infra*, p. 835 ff.

himself. It is not impossible that at one time he really contemplated proclaiming himself as the successor of Moses, and on the basis of this claim demanding the service and obedience of the Jews of Arabia.[1] He laid stress moreover in this connection on their office or function as *preachers*, warning the people of the consequences of idolatry and wrong-doing, and seems never himself to have laid claim to the power of foretelling the future. The doctrinal sūras of this period are 75, 77, 79, 80, 81 f., 84, and many others, and parts of others.[2] (3) The 'narratives' of the Qur'ān are derived almost entirely from the Old and New Testaments. They seem however to have reached Muhammad in a much distorted form, probably entirely by hearsay or oral tradition. At first they are found as illustrations or enforcements of the warnings which he uttered, and to give weight to his threatenings of punishment. Later however they stand by themselves, and apparently serve no definite purpose beyond that of general instruction and information. There is an advance also in correctness and accuracy of detail, as though the Prophet's information became more complete in the course of time. With the Biblical stories are intermingled fragments of native tradition, apparently derived from ancient Arabian folk-lore. The historical sūras are 11 f., 19, 20 f., 26 f., 28, 38, 51, 54, etc.[3] (4) The fourth class comprises chapters which dwell upon the wonders of nature, regarded as 'signs' which demonstrate the goodness or just dealing of God. Such illustrative or moralising descriptions are found throughout the Qur'ān, but in greater number and detail in the later period. The resemblance at times to parts of the Hebrew Psalms is too close to be accidental. Sūras 13, 16 (cp. Ps. 104), 22, 35, 45, 55 (cp. Ps. 136), 71, 142, etc.[4] (5) In the fifth class are contained the laws and regulations which Muhammad enacted at Mecca for the guidance of the community in his polemic against the idols, and at Medina for the purposes of administration and control. Parts of sūra 17 recall the Decalogue, and in Dr. Hirschfeld's view are actually modelled upon it. Other chapters belonging to this class are 6, 25. 64 ff., 29, 31, 93. 9 ff., etc.[5]

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[1] Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

[2] p. 47 ff.

[3] p. 59 ff.

[4] p. 72 ff.

[5] p. 79 ff.

To the whole of the Qur'ān moreover, as thus delivered piecemeal by the Prophet, there was applied the strange doctrine of 'abrogation,' according to which any given rule or utterance might at any moment be modified or entirely set aside by a subsequent revelation. Evidently in this way Muhammad intended to preserve entire liberty of action, to deal with varying circumstances. But the doctrine appears curiously incompatible with any theory of inspiration, or any attribution of authority or inerrancy to the utterances themselves. The explanation offered was that the abrogation itself was part of the Divine purpose, that in sending the revelation Allah knew and intended it to be of only temporary obligation.[1] No announcement, however, of its temporary character appears ever to have been made. According to the tradition two hundred and twenty-five verses have been annulled by later revelations, and most of these are taken, as would naturally be expected, from Meccan sūras. A list of twenty, presumably the most important, is given by Jalālu'd-Dīn, the abrogation of which is acknowledged by all. The difficulties and contradictions inherent in any such doctrine do not appear to have been realised by the doctors of Islām.[2]

Abrogation

[1] Sūra ii. 100 :—'Whatever verse We cancel or cause thee to forget, We bring a better or its like. Knowest thou not that God hath power over all things?' Cp. also sūra xvi. 103 :—'And when we change one verse for another, and God knoweth best what He revealeth, they say "Thou art only a fabricator." Nay! but most of them have no knowledge.'

[2] A complete abstract of all the sūras with their titles will be found in Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.* Qur'ān; cp. Zwemer, ch. xvii. p. 169 ff.; and the *Introductions* to the several translations. On the special doctrine of Abrogation, Hirschfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 5 f.;

Sources of Qur'ān

More detailed study of the Qur'ān and of its relations to older faiths has made it increasingly plain that there was little in Muhammad's creed or practice that could claim originality; that surrounded as he was by conflicting opinions and religious beliefs he formed out of these with great skill and insight into the character of those whom he addressed an eclectic system, the central theme or dogma of which was the proclamation of one God, the absolute Lord of all in heaven and on earth. The main sources upon which he relied, and from which he derived practically the whole of his teaching, appear to be enumerated in the Qur'ān itself, sūr. xxii. 17 :—'The true believers, and those who judaize, and the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Magians, God shall judge between them on the day of Resurrection.' There were pressed into service therefore, to form a system unique in its skilful moulding of heterogeneous elements into a consistent whole, besides the early legends and usages of Arabia, which formed the background as it were of the Prophet's life-work, the traditions and beliefs of the Jews, with which he came into close and perpetual contact, especially at Medina; a more irregular and distant acquaintance with Christianity in a mixed and debased form; and Persian Zoroastrianism. It is against all probability to suppose that among these sources were comprised *written* books. There is no evidence that Muhammad was able to consult the original documents of any of these religions, even if they had been within his reach. The instruction conveyed to him, which he in turn passed on to his followers, can hardly have

Hughes, p. 520, where the verses abrogated according to Jalālu'd-Dīn are enumerated; Sell, *Faith of Islām*,[2] p. 74.

been other than entirely oral. It is not likely, for example, that Muhammad had ever actually seen a copy of the Old or New Testaments, nor is it certain that an Arabic version of the Scriptures was in existence in his day.

Of the three religious systems named it is unquestionable that the first exercised the most powerful external influence on the creed and doctrine of Muhammad as formulated in the Qur'ān. The great names of the Old Testament reappear here. The stories of their lives are given in a more or less fanciful and altered shape; and are put forward as original divine revelations. Perhaps the most curious and noticeable variation from the Biblical account is that, according to the view held by Muslims, it was Ishmael, and not Isaac, whom his father would have offered up in sacrifice. This however is not definitely stated in the Qur'ān, and appears to be a matter of inference.[1] Jesus Christ is frequently referred to as a great prophet, and it is asserted that he prophesied of the coming of Muhammad after him.[2] The incidents also of His

Judaism and Christianity

[1] The passage is in one of the Meccan sūras, no. xxxvii.; but the son who is referred to is not expressly named:—'And when he was of an age to assist him in work, Abraham said, "My son, verily I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee; consider then what thou seest right." He said, "My father, do what thou art commanded; thou shalt find me of the patient, if God will." And when they had become resigned, he laid him down on his forehead. And We cried to him, "O Abraham! Now hast thou satisfied the vision. Verily thus do We recompense the righteous." This was indeed a conclusive trial. And We redeemed him with a great ransom; and We left over for him among posterity. Peace be upon Abraham.'

[2] Sūr. lxi. 6:— Īsa the son of Mary said, Ye sons of Israel verily I am a messenger of God to you, confirming the teaching

life and death are mentioned, His miracles and the gospel which He taught. The name of John the Baptist also occurs. On the other hand, the doctrine of the jinns seems clearly to be derived from the magi of Persia; probably also that of the resurrection, and in substance the conception of paradise and hell. There is only one distinct quotation from the Christian Scriptures, sūra xxi. 105, referring to and citing the words of Ps. xxxvii. 29.[1] But there are several passages which suggest the language and thoughts of the Old Testament, and even of the New.[2]

of the Law which ye possess, and announcing a messenger who shall come after me; his name will be Ahmad.' *'Īsa* is the usual form under which the name Jesus appears in the Qur'ān, and is the form known and recognised everywhere by Muhammadans. *Ahmad* is explained to be the same as *Muhammad*, with which it is in fact identical in origin and meaning.

[1] 'And now, since the Law was given, have We written in the Psalms that "My servants the righteous shall inherit the earth."'

[2] Cp. sūr. xxvi. 196, xv. 28 f.:—'Thy Lord said to the angels, Verily I create man of dried clay, of stiffened earth wrought into shape; and when I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, then do ye bow down to him in worship,' cp. Gen. ii. 7. Apparent reminiscences of N.T. language are sūr. vii. 38:—'Verily they who deny our signs, and turn away from them, unto these the gate of heaven shall not be opened, and they shall not enter Paradise, until the camel passes through the eye of the needle,' cp. Matt. xix. 24; sūr. xlvi. 19:—'And on the day when the unbelievers shall be exposed to the fire (it shall be said), Ye received your good things in your life in this world, and ye rejoiced in them; therefore this day shall ye be rewarded with a punishment of shame, in that ye dealt proudly on the earth against the truth, and lived in perverseness,' cp. Luke xvi. 25. See Clair-Tisdall, *Sources of Islām*, Edinburgh, 1901, p. 72 f. An interesting art. on the teaching of the Qur'ān in relation to the Christian Scriptures by J. Munro appeared in *CMSI*, July, 1898, p. 496 ff.

The doctrines of the Qur'ān and of Muhammadanism in general may therefore be assigned to their several origins as follows; although it must of course be remembered that frequently Muhammad may have been indebted for his teaching to more than one source, and that certainty in detai is not always attainable.

(1) *Judaism*: The doctrines of God, His Unity, Power, etc.; of the Resurrection and Judgement; of the angels as divine messengers; of the obligation and hours of Prayer, and the direction in which prayer should be made; the rules of fasting, purification, etc.; and the many stories and legends which are recited of Adam, Noah and the Flood, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, etc.

(2) *Sabianism*: Astrological beliefs, and superstitions connected with the sun, moon, and planets; possibly also the conception of a month devoted to fasting and prayer.

(3) *Christianity*: Doctrines of the spirit and word of God; of almsgiving; probably of a month of fasting, from the Christian Lent; the signs of the Last Day, and perhaps also the doctrines themselves of Resurrection and Final Judgement; perhaps of Gabriel, as the messenger of God; narratives of Jesus Christ, the apostles, Virgin Mary, etc., and later stories and legends derived apparently from apocryphal gospels or tradition, as the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (sūr. xviii.), references to Alexander the Great, etc.

(4) *Zoroastrianism*: The teaching concerning Paradise and hell, the houris, and the bridge *sirāt*; the jinn, or spirits; the origin and nature of the universe, or cosmogony in general.

(5) *Primitive Arabian Beliefs and Practices*: The rites and usages of the sacred pilgrimage; the reverence for sacred places, stones, etc., social customs in general, including polygamy; the name, and with the name in part at least the doctrine of a supreme deity, Allah.[1]

To a Muhammadan the Qur'ān is the perfect and

[1] E. Sell, *Sources of Islām*, in CMSI., August, 1901, p 588 ff.; Clair-Tisdall, *Sources of Islām*; Hughes, *s.v. Qurān*. The Muslim doctrine of Revelation, with reference to the origina sources, is discussed by Dr. O. Pautz, *Muhammad's Lehre von der Offenbarung quellenmässig untersucht*, Leipzig, 1898.

unapproachable model of style, as well as a book of inspired teaching. Muhammad himself challenged his opponents to produce a single sūra equal to any contained therein; and we are not told that the challenge was ever taken up. All the rules of grammar, rhetoric, etc., that are taught in Muslim schools are founded on the Qur'ān, and deduced from its practice. So that there is no cause for wonder if the book be found to conform to them in the minutest details. It is believed further that its directions are obligatory for all time, and under all circumstances, that the least and apparently most trivial regulations for the behaviour of the early Muslims, although manifestly adapted to the needs of inhabitants of Arabia, are universally binding upon all men, equally with the most solemn moral obligations and duties. No degree or distinction in the character of the ordinances enjoined is admitted. They are without exception imperative upon all who in any age or country adopt the religion of Islām; and they are, in theory at least, sufficient for every possible requirement. Nothing more is needed for salvation. They demand no modification, and they are capable of no improvement. That the extreme orthodox position is not unfairly thus stated, a paragraph from the *Egyptian Herald* of February 22, 1896, may be cited to prove. Many of the more liberal-minded Muhammadans would doubtless disavow it at the present day. The *Herald* is the exponent of orthodox Musalmān ideas at Cairo; and the editor writes with reference to some words uttered at the opening of a mosque in London:—

Character and Claims of Qur'ān

'Both (speakers) seem to have spoken at the opening proceedings in favour of adapting Islām to European ideas.

I do not know what meaning they attach to the phrase; but I do know that no adaptation or alteration of Islām will be accepted by any Muslim people. Islām as a religion, as a guide to man in life, in his duties to God and man, is divine and perfect. To say that it needs adaptation is to say that it is neither divine nor perfect, and no Muslim can or will admit either assumption. Islām as it is is perfect, and as wonderfully adapted to the needs of man in England, or in the Arctic regions, as it is to the Bedouins or the Arabian desert; and the fact that it is so is one of the striking proofs of its divine origin. It is written, "There is no change in the words of God"; and therefore the Qur'ān and the Sunnat are for ever and for all men unchangeable.'

Farther east, at Poona, in December of the preceding year, a conference of Musalmān gentlemen and doctors was held to consider whether it would be advisable to join with Hindus and others in promoting measures of social reform. The following resolution was passed:—

> In the face of the Qur'ān it is altogether needless for the Musalmāns to join in any purely sectional conference, for Islām is a perfect exponent of social emancipation and human progress in all its aspects.'[1]

It would not be difficult to multiply examples and illustrations. The movement however on the part of Muslims themselves in favour of a wider outlook and a more generous interpretation of their own law has gained not a few adherents. There are many who realise the need of self-adaptation to a wider world, and of a broader basis for rule and study, than the traditional interpretation of Arabic text or commentary can supply, and these for the most part

[1] I owe these two quotations to the Rev. E. Sell, *Faith of Islām*[2], pp. 299, 332, notes.

are in the front rank in knowledge and education and zeal, and will take the lead increasingly in all that concerns the real interests of Muhammadan peoples.

DOCTRINES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Foundations of the Faith

THE Muslim creed, or articles of belief, may be conveniently discussed under the two divisions of (1) the origins or early principles, and (2) the nature and extent of the faith, its development in various lands and among various peoples; or in other words the sources from which the beliefs are derived, and the articles of belief themselves. Under the latter head will naturally fall to be considered the orders and sects of Islām, which have arisen at different times, and in which have been crystallized doctrinal and theological ideas and tendencies. The Qur'ān is not the sole authority on which is based Muhammadan faith and practice. It is indeed the supreme and final court of appeal, beyond challenge or question above all others, and the only authority which is accepted by all alike, whether orthodox or heretic. There are however three further sources, mainly independent of the Qur'ān but in part derived from it, which are everywhere recognised, although as to the precise limits and details and contents there is dispute between the different schools of thought. These three are the *Sunnat* or Tradition, the *Ijmā'*, and the *Qiyas*. Together with the Qur'ān they

constitute the four foundations of the Muhammadan faith.

The term *Sunnat* signifies 'usage,' or 'rule'; and is applied technically to the rule of faith or observance founded on the traditions. It is obligatory not only to obey the written word of Muhammad, but as far as possible to conform in everything to his practice—to do as he did in ordinary life, and not merely to follow his religious precepts.[1] Thus within the early centuries a record was made of all the sayings and acts of the Prophet traditionally known and handed down from the Companions, or first followers of Muhammad. The accounts thus preserved were diligently sifted, examined, and compared, and the collected results embodied in the so-called 'six correct' or 'canonical books.'[2] Of these six the earliest in date was compiled at the beginning of the third century of the Hijrah by a Muhammadan doctor of Bukhāra, who is said to have gathered together traditions to the number of 600,000. He rejected however after investigation all but 7,275 as insufficiently authenticated; and these he placed on record in his book. Each tradition was required to be certified by a chain of witnesses, technically an

Sunnat

[1] 'The essence of religion has been stated by a learned theologian to consist of three things: first, to follow the Prophet in morals and in acts; secondly, to eat only lawful food; thirdly, to be sincere in all actions.' Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[2] Sell, pp. 21, 83 f.; Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, p. 130 ff.; R. A. Nicholson, *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 337. The six collections are those of al-Bukhārī (A.D. 810–870), Muslim, of Nishāpūr 817–873), Abū Dā'ūd, of Seistan (815–888), at-Tirmīdhī (822–892), an-Nasā'ī (827–914), ibn Mājah (822–886). The last-named seems to have secured recognition with difficulty on the ground that the author had admitted traditions on insufficient authority.

isnād, by whom in succession it had been handed down from the contemporaries of the Prophet. The validity and obligatory character of the tradition depends upon the nature of the *isnād*. In order that this may be accepted as a rule of life and conduct, it is necessary that the several links in the chain should be formed by persons well known for their integrity and reliability. If the *isnād* is perfect, obedience to the rule formulated or precedent set is absolutely incumbent upon all believers. The authority of these traditions is second only to that of the written word, and it is evident that no genuine tradition can be opposed to the Qur'ān. To these again the same law of abrogation is applied as to the Qur'ān itself, *i.e.* an earlier may be modified or set aside by a later tradition. These six orthodox books are not recognised by the Shī'ahs, who have five different collections of their own; the earliest of which, however, dates only from the beginning of the fourth century A.H., and is accordingly about a century later than the first Sunnī book.[1]

Muhammad himself is said to have given command that his followers should observe the Sunnat. And the Musalmān doctors clearly assert that the injunctions thus delivered and handed down are as though uttered by the very mouth of God. The distinction in authority therefore between the Qur'ān and the Sunnat is in practice little more than nominal. A parallel instance of collections of this nature devised as a supplement to the written law is found in the Hebrew Talmud, and the 'traditions of the elders' (Matt. xv. 2 f.; Mark vii. 3, 5).

The third foundation of the faith is *Ijmā'*,

[1] They are enumerated in a note in *Faith of Islām*, p. 84.

'unanimity,' or unanimous consent of the Fathers. The early doctors and teachers of Islām were acknowledged to be competent to lay down rules, and to supply precedents, in matters not covered by any known law or practice of the Prophet himself. These legal decisions, when uttered by a recognised authority and generally acquiesced in, came to have the force of law, and were equally binding with a formal tradition. To the men whose learning and high character entitled them to pronounce judgements of this kind was given the name of *Mujtahidūn*, plural of *Mujtahid*, signifying 'one who exerts himself,' 'is zealous' or 'diligent,' from the same root as *jihād*. Moreover theoretically such an authoritative decision may be given at any time, if there is found a man of the requisite high attainments in learning and piety; but in practice this position is conceded only to the Companions of the Prophet and their immediate successors. No others are by the orthodox Sunnīs held worthy of the honour.[1] The Shī'ahs however

Ijmā'

[1] Cp. the enumeration given in *Faith of Islām*, p. 44, of the necessary qualifications of a Mujtahid, taken from a Musalmān authority :—

(1) The knowledge of the Qur'ān and all that is related to it; that is to say, a complete knowledge of Arabic literature, a profound acquaintance with the orders of the Qur'ān and all their subdivisions, their relationship to each other and their connection with the orders of the Sunnat. He should know when and why each verse of the Qur'ān was written, should have a perfect acquaintance with the literal meaning of the words, the speciality or generality of each clause, the abrogating and abrogated sentences. He should be able to make clear the meaning of the 'obscure' passages, to discriminate between the literal and the allegorical, the universal and the particular.

(2) He must know the Qur'ān by heart with all the Traditions and explanations.

3) He must have a perfect knowledge of the Traditions, or

believe in the existence of a succession of Mujtahidūn up to the present time; and the title is in common use in Persia for a doctor of the law or a man learned in the Qur'ān. The influence of the Mujtahids is very great, and they are held in the highest esteem for wisdom; but they are often strong opponents of all innovation from without, whether in religion or in politics.

Ijmā' is of three kinds, *viz.*—unanimity in opinion, unanimity in practice, and unanimity by tacit consent. The last expression is applied to such views and usages as have won their way gradually to general acceptance, and have then been allowed to pass unchallenged. Thus the binding force of Ijmā' is mainly a question of sufficiency and degree of authority. Where the unanimous consent to any doctrine or observance is general and unqualified, it becomes equally binding with the ordinances of the Qur'ān or the Sunnat.

Four Orthodox Systems

All these traditions and judgements have been crystallized or codified into the four great orthodox systems of jurisprudence, which bear the names of the four doctors of the law, Abū Hanīfah, Ibn Mālik, Ash-Shāfi'ī, and Ibn Hanbal. To one or other of these every Sunnī Muslim attaches himself. Since the days of the four great *Imāms*, or 'leaders,' it is held that no one has attained to the rank and

at least of three thousand of them. He must know their source, history, object, and their connection with the laws of the Qur'ān. He should know by heart the most important traditions.

(4) A pious and austere life.

(5) A profound knowledge of all the sciences of the Law.

(6) A complete knowledge of the four schools of jurisprudence.

As Dr. Sell justly adds, 'the obstacles are almost insurmountable.'

dignity of a Mujtahid, and the authority and repute of these celebrated teachers is second only to that of Muhammad himself. Some brief reference to their life and teaching is almost essential to a right understanding of the legal and doctrinal developments of Islām.[1] The difference between the schools, however, is only to a very slight extent legal or doctrinal. It turns mainly upon the question, so often recurring in Islām, of the rights of private judgement in the valuation of the traditions, and in a broader sense of the observances of religion generally. The debate however is not as to any existing power to modify or reject traditional rule. Few are prepared to admit any present-day rights of criticism. But whether and how far the founder of the school was justified in estimating the validity and worth of the several traditions according to his own private judgement, and pronouncing a corresponding decision upon them.

Abū Hanīfah was born at Kūfa, or as others say at Basra, at the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth century of our era, and died in prison at Baghdād in or about the year 768 A.D. He is said to have been the grandson of a Persian slave, and for his share in an unsuccessful revolt against the Umayyad Dynasty, to have been thrown into prison, where he remained for five years before his death. His teaching is deduced from the Qur'ān on the principles of a rigorous logic, and the part allowed to tradition is restricted to very narrow limits. He claimed to found everything on argument and inference, and his system therefore is of all the most logically coherent. His work was reduced finally to order and codified half a century

[1] Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 126 ff., 176 f.; Sell, *op. cit.* pp. 26 ff., 85; Hughes, *ss.vv.*

later by Muhammad Ash-Shaibānī, himself an author of repute; and has been often reproduced in more or less complete form up to the present day. His school is on the whole the most popular in Islām, and his doctrines the most widely accepted. They predominate to the practical exclusion of all others in Turkey and India, and among the Muhammadans of China.

Ibn Mālik ibn Anas was born at Medina, 716 A.D., and spent the whole of his life in that town, dying there in old age towards the end of the century. At Medina he had every opportunity of hearing and testing the various traditions concerning Muhammad; and of these he was an enthusiastic and diligent collector. In contrast therefore to that of Abū Hanīfah his system has been described as historical and traditionary, giving prominence to record and story, where his rival had laid the chief stress on reason and inference from the written word. Ibn Mālik is even reported to have expressed on his deathbed much sorrow that at any time he had ventured to use private judgement. His teaching was current and accepted mainly in the West, in North Africa and in Spain.

The founder of the third school of jurisprudence was *Ash-Shāfi'ī*, a member of the tribe of the Quraish. He occupied a position intermediate between his two predecessors, and drew from them both. Born in Palestine in the year of the death of Abū Hanīfah, he spent his youth at Mecca, but later became a pupil of Ibn Mālik at Medīna. Like his predecessor Abū Hanīfah, he seems then to have become involved in political schemes, and to have been taken as a prisoner to Baghdād, where he learnt the doctrines of Hanīfah from Ash-Shaibānī. His subsequent life was spent in Egypt, and he died

at Cairo in or about the year 820 A.D. He is said to have been a man of immense and exact learning, and to have composed more works than any other Muhammadan author; of these however little has been preserved. It does not appear that there was anything novel or original in his system. His authority is followed chiefly in Egypt and Arabia.

The last of the great Imāms, *Ahmad ibn Hanbal*, was born at Baghdād in the year 780 A.D., and is said to have begun the study of tradition at the early age of fifteen. At Baghdād also he listened to the teaching of Ash-Shāfi'ī, at the time of a visit which the latter paid to his city. By the heterodox Khalīf Al-Ma'mūn, 813–833 A.D., he was persecuted for maintaining the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ān,[1] was beaten and suffered imprisonment for seven years. Later he was restored to liberty and honour in the reign of Ma'mūn's nephew, the orthodox and reactionary Khalīf Al-Mutawakkil, 847–861 A.D., who in his third year issued a proclamation forbidding men to hold that the Qur'ān was created. Ibn Ḥanbal altogether abandoned the principle of logical or analogical deduction, on which Abū Hanīfah had proceeded, and based his system entirely on Traditionalism; thus in fact returning to the methods and principles of Ibn Mālik, but carrying them to still greater lengths. He died at Baghdād at the age of seventy-five, greatly respected for his pious character and life. For many years his reputation was widespread and his teaching greatly influential, especially in Mesopotamia and Syria. The system which he formulated, as far as it was possessed of distinctive

[1] The decree of the Khalīf was passed in 212 A.H., or 827 A.D., that all who held the Qur'ān to be uncreated were guilty of heresy. Cp. Sell, pp. 79 f., 190 f.

characteristics, is now practically obsolete; but its principles were revived, and became active in the movement of the Wahhābīs at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[1]

The rules and doctrines of Ibn Hanbal were carried to yet greater lengths in the school of the Zāhirites, 'literalists.' Dā'ūd ibn 'Alī, their founder, was born at Kūfa, 818 A.D., and died at Baghdād at the age of sixty-eight. His doctrine of the absolute authority of tradition, and the binding force of the letter of the Qur'ān to be interpreted without regard to its spirit, became popular in Persia, and was widely accepted also in the West. None of the writings of the founder or his immediate followers have been preserved. In its progress, however, the doctrines of the sect became so far modified in a mystical and heretical direction as to have lost any claim to a place among the orthodox systems of Islām.[2]

The third foundation may then be said practically to consist of the judgements of these four doctors. Their agreement is decisive to establish any article of faith. Nothing which is contrary to their expressed views is admissible, either as matter of belief or of practice.

The fourth foundation is *Qiyās*; the meaning of which term is literally 'measure' or 'comparison.' The word is used technically of analogical reasoning or inference drawn from the Qur'ān, Sunnat, or Ijmā'; and it is therefore, strictly speaking, supplementary to these three. No new principle or teaching is involved in Qiyās, but merely the bringing to light and formulating what is already virtually present in the earlier 'foundations,'—the application of instructions and precedents already set forth to cases

Qiyās

[1] *infra*, p. 863 ff.

[2] I. Goldziher, *Die Zāhiriten*, Leipzig, 1884; Brockelmann, p. 128 f.; E. G. Browne, *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, i. p. 357.

parallel or similar to those described. Thus, to take a familiar example, the Qur'ān forbids the use of *khamr*, Heb. יַיִן, a kind of intoxicating drink. From this it is inferred by Qiyās that wine and opium are also interdicted, although neither of them is mentioned by name.

These then are the four foundations of the faith, the obligations of law and doctrine for every Muslim believer. Upon these are based the practical injunctions of Islām, the so-called 'pillars of religion,' the faithful observance of which constitutes to the loyal Muhammadan the whole duty of man.[1] They are five in number; and over the right understanding and interpretation of some of them much religious controversy has been held. The first is the recital of the *Kalimah*, or creed, 'There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Prophet of God'[2]; the confession of the Divine Unity and Uniqueness, the great truth of Islām, which has ever been the source and inspiration of its religious strength. The recital of this formula constitutes a man a Muhammadan; to refuse to say these words is to be a *kāfir*, an 'unbeliever' and an outcast. Upon this is based the charge which Muhammadans

The Five Pillars of Religion

[1] There is a kind of summary of practical duty in Qur. xvi. 92:—'Verily God commandeth justice and beneficence and generosity to those who are near of kin; and forbiddeth wickedness and wrong-dealing and oppression.'

[2] '*Lā ilāha illā 'llāhu wa Muhammadun rasūlu' llāhi*.' Qur'ān, sūras xlvii. 21, xlviii. 29; cp. xvi. 54. The two parts or declarations of the Kalimah are not brought into immediate connection in the Qur'ān. It was the work of a later generation to unite them into one universal confession of faith. In practice however they are never separated; and as articles of faith stand in the same position, and require the same absolute and unquestioning acceptance.

bring against Christians of being polytheists and worshippers of three gods; they are *kāfirs* and unclean, for by their doctrine of a co-equal and co-eternal Son and of the Trinity they deny the sole right and supremacy of the one God, and place themselves on a level with heathen and idolaters. The remaining pillars are as follows :—

(2) *Salāt*, the five daily prayers.

(3) Fasting, especially the thirty days' religious fast of the month Ramadhān.

(4) *Zakāt*, or almsgiving; which in Islām is regulated by law.

(5) The *Hajj*, or sacred pilgrimage to Mecca, in the twelfth month of the Muhammadan year.

Kalimah or Creed

The Musalmān creed therefore, properly so called, is of the utmost simplicity, *viz.* belief in one God and acknowledgement of Muhammad as His Prophet. Undoubtedly to this plain and simple character much of the wonderful and widespread success of Islām as a missionary religion is due. For it makes little preliminary demand either on the intellect or the heart; and on the mere recital of a short form of words places at once without further probation the newly-won disciple in a position of equality with the oldest believer. Especially would this seem to have been the secret of its rapid progress in India; that it was not only the religion of the conquerors, but that it offered to the lowest a ready means of emancipation from the trammels and permanent degradation of caste. Thus it made them members as it were of a new and noble caste, where the distinctions of birth and occupation and name went for nothing, and in the acceptance of a common faith theoretically at least all became brethren.

In later Muhammadan teaching, however, this doctrine of the Unity of God has been elaborated into a complete theology, which includes all that in Western or Christian systems would be considered under the headings of the Divine Offices, Attributes, Works, etc. The conception of the Divine Nature itself moreover is in a marked degree dissociated from those more active faculties or possibilities, which to a Western mind are the inseparable concomitants of the idea of a Person. Such conclusions would seem to follow necessarily from the conception of the Divine Being as absolute Will or Fate. Where all is pre-destined, there can be no room for the exercise of a moral judgement, or the interference of moral purposes. Allah is supreme Governor and Ruler, but is without right of initiative, and is bound fast by the laws of a pre-determined rule, which He is powerless to modify or control.[1] His function is executive, but in no sense directive,—*non-moral*, and dissociated from any conception of free prerogative or capacity such as appear especially to constitute the *person*. It is therefore asserted that no description of God is possible, or is possible only in negative terms—'whatever idea the mind conceives, God is the opposite of it.'[2]

Doctrine of the Divine Unity

'There is no god but God—are words simply tantamount in English to the negation of any deity save one alone; and this much they certainly mean in Arabic, but they imply much more also. Their full sense is, not only to deny absolutely and

[1] Cp. the curious parable of the three brothers and their fate after death, by which al-Ash'arī put to silence the Mu'lazilite teacher al-Jubbai. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 179 f.

[2] Cp. the Indian doctrine, *supra*, p. 278 f.

unreservedly all plurality, whether of nature or of person, in the Supreme Being, not only to establish the Unity of the Unbegotting and Unbegot, but besides this the words, in Arabic and among Arabs, imply that this one Supreme Being is also the only Agent, the only Force, the only Act existing throughout the universe, and leave to all beings else, matter or spirit, instinct or intelligence, physical or moral, nothing but pure unconditional passiveness, alike in movement or in quiescence, in action or in capacity. The sole power, the sole motor, movement, energy, and deed is God; the rest is downright inertia and mere instrumentality, from the highest archangel down to the simplest atom of creation. Hence in this one sentence "La Ilāh illa Allāh" is summed up a system which, for want of a better name, I may be permitted to call the Pantheism of Force, or of Act, thus exclusively assigned to God, who absorbs it all, exercises it all, and to whom alone it can be ascribed, whether for preserving or for destroying, for relative evil or for equally relative good. . . . In such a theology no place is left for absolute good or evil, reason or extravagance; all is abridged in the autocratic will of the one great Agent: "sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas"; or more significantly still, in Arabic, "kemā yesha'o," "as he wills it," to quote the constantly recurring expression of the Koran.'[1]

Belief in the Unity of God further includes the obligation to worship Him alone; all other beings, whether angels or saints, are excluded as objects of worship, direct or indirect. In the Qur'ān, however, Iblis (Satan) is repeatedly rebuked and

[1] Quoted from Palgrave in Zwemer, p. 172 f.; cp. Hughes, *s.v.* God.

cursed for his refusal to bow down before Adam, the first creation of God (sūr. ii. 32, xv. 30 ff., xvii. 63, xviii. 48, xxxviii. 71 ff.). Idolatry therefore, or image worship in any form is abhorrent to the true Muslim. In many Muhammadan countries however the reverence paid at the tombs and shrines of saints approaches very near to worship.[1]

The more amplified and extended creed, to which every orthodox Musalmān is expected to give his assent, is expressed in the following articles:—'I believe in God, Angels, Books, Prophets, the Last Day, the Predestination by the most High God of Good and Evil, and the Resurrection after Death.' It is not a little remarkable that in the Qur'ān belief is expressed in the resurrection of animals.[2] Of these the most important are the doctrines of the Divine Attributes implicit in the first article of belief; of the Freedom of the Will, or rather the denial of its freedom in the sixth; and Muhammadan Eschatology, fifth and seventh.

On the question of the nature and attributes of God some of the keenest and most determined controversies have been waged in the Musalmān world. The attributes are described as seven in

[1] The Divine titles or names of God are given in sūr. lix. 22 ff.; Muhammadans however enumerate ninety-nine names, to which *Allah* is added as the hundredth. The 'Sūra of the Unity' is the well-known hundred and twelfth:—

> Say! He is God alone,
> God the Eternal:
> He begetteth not, and is not begotten;
> Neither is there any equal unto Him.

[2] Sūr. vi. 38:—'All beasts upon the earth, and all birds that fly with their wings, are a people like unto you; We have not omitted anything in the Book; unto their Lord then shall they be gathered.' Cp. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, i. p. 258 f.

number, *viz.* Life, Knowledge, Power, Will, Hearing, Vision, Speech. The orthodox view is that these are eternal, and a real part of the essence of God; that they are incapable of explanation or comprehension by human reason, but are to be accepted by faith. The second attribute, that of knowledge, is for men primary and fundamental, for through it the rest are apprehended; and the Divine knowledge is conveyed through the sacred revelation of the Qur'ān. A further distinction is made between the first four attributes, which are essential; the three last are secondary or derivative, being dependent upon the others, and having no existence apart from them. With regard to all of them, however, inquiry or discussion as to their nature was precluded as of subjects beyond the reach of the mind of man.

Attributes of God

During the early centuries an influential sect of free-thinkers existed, known as *Mu'tazilas*, 'seceders' or 'separatists,' who dissented from the orthodox view, especially as regarded the attributes of hearing, vision, and speech, teaching that, while the nature of God was eternal, the attributes were mere accidents and not of the essence of His being. Otherwise there would be many eternals, as many indeed as the attributes,—a hypothesis declared to be impossible. In their opinion also man was competent by the exercise of reason to gain to a certain extent a real knowledge of God. This proposition, in so far as it asserted the rights of reason and of private judgement, the leaders of the orthodox party strenuously denied.[1]

Mu'tazilas

[1] On the Divine Attributes see esp. Sell, *op. cit.*, pp. 166 ff., 185 ff.; Hughes, *s.v.* God, p. 19 ff. On the Mu'tazilas cp. also Sell, p. 174 ff., where a Mu'tazila profession or creed, quoted from

The views of the Mu'tazilas, which included a rejection of the dogmas of the eternity of the Qur'ān and of predestination, and a strong assertion of the free agency of man, were predominant at Baghdād in the reigns of the three Abbāsid Khalīfs, Ma'mūn and his brother and nephew, who in turn succeeded him, 813–847 A.D. Under Mutawakkil, another nephew of Ma'mūn, a return to orthodoxy took place, the Mu'tazilas were condemned and persecuted, and gradually ceased to exist. Their teaching represented the revolt of the spirit that craved for freedom in thought and life against the slavery and rigidity of the orthodox system. They would have emancipated Islām from the bondage of traditionalism and the letter of the law, and given it liberty to shape its own doctrine and destiny. But the result would not have been the Islām of Muhammad and his successors. The movement however, full of the promise of religious liberty as it appeared to be, failed and its advocates were silenced; and their failure is traced, without doubt rightly, to the fact that they devoted their strength to mere verbal discussions and intellectual theorizing, and were destitute of any deep moral convictions or sincere love of the truth.

The turning point in the fortunes of the Mu'tazilas was reached in the life and influence of al-Ash'arī, who himself originally of liberal and free-thinking views was converted to the strictest orthodoxy, and thereafter employed his great dialectical ability in refuting the

al-Ash'arī

the Arabic author Sharastānī, will be found; Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, p. 124 f; E. G. Browne, *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, 1. pp. 281–89, 395; R. A. Nicholson, *Lit. Hist. of the Arabs*, pp. 222–24, 367–70; T. J. de Boer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, London, 1903, p. 43 ff.

opinions which he had formerly held. Born at Basrah in 873–4 A.D., he is said to have adhered to the Mu'tazilite school until his fortieth year, when with dramatic suddenness in the mosque at Basrah he proclaimed his abandonment of his former creed, and return to the orthodox faith.[1] Removing to Baghdād he taught there for some years, and was the author of many works, theological and controversial. There also he died in the year 935–6 A.D., pronouncing anathemas according to the story on the Mu'tazilas with his last breath.[2]

Revival in North India

Within the last few years there has been an earnest attempt to revive the Mu'tazila school of thought and teaching in the north of India, the leaders of the movement being the late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, founder of the Muhammadan College at Aligarh, and Syed Amīr Ali, a judge of the High Court of Bengal, and author of several works in English on Islām and the life and character of Muhammad. What the permanent result may be it is yet too soon to forecast. It is undoubtedly a sincere endeavour, inspired by Western conceptions of rectitude and morality, to lead Muhammadanism forward on the lines of a true enlightenment and religious progress; an endeavour that will be watched with the utmost interest by every broad-minded lover of goodness and right. The spirit of inquiry and the claim to freedom of life and thought, once crushed and for so long quiescent, are not likely again to die out. And while it is impossible to foresee the issue, it will be pregnant

[1] Sell, p. 179 ff.; who gives two versions of the tradition.

[2] Brockelmann, p. 125; T. W. Arnold, in *ERE*, ii. p. 111 f., where will be found references to other literature; E. G. Browne *op. cit.*, i. pp. 283, 291 f., 366; de Boer, p. 56 f.; Hughes, *s*

with results of immeasurable importance, not only to Islām but to the whole world.[1]

A second point raised by the Mu'tazilas in connection with the attributes of God was that of the eternity of the Qur'ān. The question arose naturally in the discussion of the seventh attribute, that of Speech; which is understood by Muslim theologians to comprehend not only utterance with the mouth, but also all modes of revelation or communication of knowledge. Denying the eternity of the attributes, these teachers logically and of necessity refused to admit the eternity of the Qur'ān, which was a corollary of the former doctrine. It would seem indeed that this particular dogma was not promulgated or held by the earlier Musalmāns; but was perhaps erected into a pillar of the faith and made binding in opposition to the opinions of the Mu'tazilas, in the second or third century after the Flight. The arguments adduced often appear to us to be mere hair-splitting and curious quibbles on words.[2] On both sides however men

Eternity of the Qur'ān

[1] According to a well-known writer on Muslim interests and progress in the south of India, the followers of the new teaching are there known as *Naturias*, and the movement corresponds to the Brahma-Samāj in Hinduism (*Harvest Field*, 1905, p. 134).

[2] Cp. Sell, p. 187 ff., for illustrations of the arguments used by either party. The verse from the Qur'ān, 'Verily His command when He willeth a thing is that He saith Be, and it is' (sūra xxxvi. 82), was brought forward to prove the eternal nature of the book in which it was written. 'Almighty God created the world by means of the word Be! Now, if that word was created, one created thing would have created another.' Cp. sūr. iii. 42, 51, vi. 72, xix. 36, xl. 70, liv. 50. The conception of creation by means of a word is of course found in other religions, cp. *Manu* i. 21:—'In the beginning he (the Lord) assigned their several names actions and conditions to all (created beings) according to the words of the Veda,' *SBE*, xxv. p. 12. On

were found ready to suffer and die for their belief.

A third question much debated by the Mu'tazilas, and on which they found themselves at variance with their co-religionists, was that of the freedom of the will. The orthodox Musalmān is a rigid fatalist. All evil, no less than all good, proceeds from the eternal will of God. The decrees of *kismet* or fate rule all; from them there is no appeal, as there is no possibility of offering resistance. A school of thought however existed, and at one period exerted considerable influence, if not in practical life yet on the form and manner in which this doctrine was expressed, which endeavoured to soften the harshness of a stern theory by allowing to man a kind of restricted liberty in the execution of the Divine decrees. In other words, the eternal will of God might in a given case remain inoperative, its action suspended, unless set in motion by the human agent. This school was identified with the followers of al-Ash'arī, and its representatives were found as far as Morocco and Spain at the beginning of the twelfth century.[1] They occupied an intermediate position between the *Jabrīans*, or extreme Calvinists on the one hand, who denied to man any personal or free agency whatever, and with whom on most points they were in agreement; and the *Quadrīans* on the other, who rejected

Freedom of the Will

the mode of the creation by the word Muhammadans themselves differ, see Cl. Huart in *Actes du prem. Congrès Intern. d'Hist. d. Religions*, ii. 2 p. 38 ff., with references. It is doubtful whether Muhammad derived his doctrine from the Christian Λόγος, cp. Heb. i. 3, *φέρων τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ*, or from the Jews. In favour of the latter view, see L. Blau in *JQR*, xii. p. 247.

[1] Brockelmann, p. 178.

altogether the dogma of the absolute Divine decree, and ascribed to man unfettered power to determine his own actions. The views of the latter were essentially the same as those of the Mu'tazilas in general, and ceased with them to have any real hold on Muhammadan thought or life. In practice all Musalmāns hold the dogma of predestination in its most absolute and unbending form.[1]

Eschatology

The remaining subject that falls to be considered is the Muhammadan doctrine of the Last Things, and of a future Judgement. All Muslims believe in a general Resurrection, both of the good and the wicked, as taught by Muhammad himself in the Qur'ān. Believers will enter Paradise, where they will revel in all manner of sensual delights. All non-Musalmāns or infidels will be tortured in hell. There appears to be a difference of opinion as to the destiny of wicked or untaithful Muhammadans. Some hold that their belief in one God and in His Prophet outweighs any evil of which they

[1] Sell, pp. 183, 233 ff.; J. R. Nicholson, in *ERE*, ii. p. 13; Hughes, *s.v.* Predestination. In the *CMSI* for the year 1900, p. 607, an extract was given from a sermon preached at Kairwān, illustrating the stringency of Muhammadan belief in this respect :—

'There is no power or will excepting the power and will of God. No created being can conceive a thought, or translate a thought into action, excepting by that unique power and will. Therefore the rebellion of Satan was in accordance with the Divine will, and by the Divine power, for His own high purposes. Man likewise (whose every sin has been fore-ordained) has no choice in the matter of evil; he must of necessity commit the full number of transgressions allotted to him (which are more than the hairs of his head), and this because no one can resist the Divine will; and just as absolutely as a person cannot move his hand or foot, excepting it be granted him by God, so he cannot steal lie or commit adultery, but by the Divine enabling.'

may have been guilty, and that they will at death equally with their fellow-believers be at once received into Paradise. Others suppose that they will undergo a short period of trial and purification in hell, at the close of which, being set free from all defilement, they will be admitted to their reward. The Mu'tazilas went further than this, and taught the existence of a purgatory, in which such souls after death were tested and prepared for a final state of blessedness or misery. All alike agreed in believing in the resurrection of the body.[1]

Every man after death undergoes a preparatory examination in the grave by the angels Munkar and Nakīr. For this purpose a kind of temporary life is given to him, that he may answer their questions as to his faith. Afterwards at the last day a balance will be set up between heaven and earth, where the actions, or as others say the books in which the record of the actions is written, are weighed under the superintendence of the angels Gabriel and Michael. Not all created beings however will be subjected to this test. Prophets and angels are altogether exempt. Moreover for unbelievers it is not necessary, seeing that their lot has already been determined. Every one will then have to pass the bridge *sirāt*, lit. 'road,' suspended above hell. The good will find the way broad and easy, and will swiftly cross over to Paradise. Beneath the wicked the bridge will appear keen as a razor and fine as a hair, and they will fall off into the fire. But all Muslims will eventually be restored to Paradise; all unbelievers will suffer eternal torments in hell. Muhammad himself will intercede for those of his followers whose evil deeds outweigh the good in the balance. For the rest there is no

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 220 ff.; Hughes, *s.v.* Resurrection.

intercessor, and their miserable fate is irretrievable. These details, and especially the feature of the bridge over hell, have been borrowed from Zoroastrianism.[1]

Prayer, *salāt*, is to be said five times a day at the appointed hours, immediately before sunrise, at noon, midway between noon and sunset, at sunset, and as soon as darkness has closed in. The duty of prayer is constantly enforced in the Qur'ān, and stated times of prayer are ordained, but no distinct reference seems to be made to the five regular periods of orthodox observance. The nearest approach to the fixed number and periods is perhaps sūr. xvii. 80 f.:— 'Observe prayer at sunset, until the setting in of the night, and the reading of the dawn; verily to the reading of the dawn testimony is borne; and watch unto prayer a part of the night, for therein is a voluntary service (*nāfilat*) for you.'[2] The number in the first instance was apparently three,

Prayer

[1] The conceptions both of the bridge and of the balance are of Persian origin; see I. Goldziher in *Actes du prem. Congrès Intern. d'Hist. des Religions*, i. p. 129 ff. The Arabic name for the bridge is apparently the same as the Persian *chīnavad*; cp. Clair-Tisdall, *Sources of Islām*, p. 88. The bridge re-appears in ancient Irish Legend; cp. C. S. Boswell, *An Irish Precursor of Dante*, London, 1908, p. 38 f. The weighing of souls or of their actions is an ordinary feature of Egyptian judgement scenes, and is found in Jewish apocalypse; see M. R. James, *Testament of Abraham*, Cambridge 1892, p. 70 ff.

[2] Cp. sūras xi. 116, xx. 130, xxx. 16, 17, *al.* According to the tradition the original injunction was to pray fifty times in the day. By his followers however this was found to be too great a burden, and Muhammad lightened the obligation by successive remissions of ten until only five remained. When Moses was informed of the result, he acknowledged that his attempt to enforce the observance of five daily periods of prayer upon the Israelites had been a failure. Cp. the intercession of Abraham for Sodom, in Gen. xviii. 16–33.

possibly two only, in the morning and evening; corresponding to the three Jewish hours of prayer, at dawn, in the afternoon, and at sunset.[1] The choice or substitution of five was due to Persian influence.[2] The tradition states that the formal directions for prayer were given to the Prophet at the time of his miraculous ascent to heaven. To these periods are added three others, immediately after sunrise, shortly before noon, and after midnight. The observance of these is not obligatory, but prayer at such hours is especially meritorious.

In the case of the regular prayers also a distinction is drawn in the nature and degree of the imposed obligation.

(a) *farz*, prayers for which a direct command has been given by God.

(b) *sunnat*, prayers, the duty of which is based upon the practice of Muhammad.

(c) *nafl*, or voluntary prayers, the repetition of which secures merit for the offerer, but no guilt is incurred by their omission.

(d) *witr*, additional forms, which may be used with advantage at any time, especially at the non-obligatory hours of prayer.

Only the first of these, according to the strict rule of the Wahhābīs, ought to be said in the mosque.[3]

Prayers under any circumstances and at any time are good, but at these five periods are strictly obligatory upon every Muslim. They may be offered either individually and privately, or in the mosque and led by an *Imām*. Any Muhammadan, being of full age and ceremonially pure, may act as Imām or leader of the prayers, standing in front of the

[1] שחרית, מנחה, ערבית. The *minchāh* prayer might lawfully be offered according to the Rabbis from midday until the darkness closed in; see Levy, *Wörterbuch*, *s.v.*

[2] Goldziher, *loc. cit.*, p. 133.

[3] Sell, p. 263 ff.; Hughes, *s.v. salāt.*

congregation; but there is usually one man appointed as minister for each mosque.[1] The form observed consists in the recital of passages from the Qur'ān, with other formulae or expressions of faith such as 'God is great,' accompanied by bowings[2] and prostrations of the body. The summons to prayer is given by the *mu'azzin* from the minaret, or if there is no minaret from the side of the mosque.

The usual call is *Allāhu akbar*, 'God is great,' repeated four times, followed by such sentences as the following:—
I testify that there is no god but God!
I testify that Muhammad is the Prophet of God!
Come to prayers! come to salvation!
Each phrase is repeated twice, and at the morning call there is added, 'Prayer is better than sleep.'

The adoption of a call instead of a bell or other instrument is said to have been due to the desire to avoid similarity to Jews or Christians. The clear musical voices of the *mu'azzins* from the tops of the minarets are very pleasant. In the earliest times in Syria the practice prevailed of the use of a wooden resounding board, either to enable the voice to carry further, or merely to attract attention; and the same is stated to be the case at the present day in some of the monasteries on Mt. Athos.[3]

The prayers themselves must all be said in Arabic,

[1] Muhammad himself is said to have prescribed the qualifications of an Imām, as follows:—'Let him act as Imām to a congregation who knows the Qur'ān thoroughly; and if all present should be equal in that respect, then let him perform who is best informed in the rules of prayer; and if they are equal in this respect also, let him act as Imām who has fled for the sake of Islām; and if equal in this likewise, let that person act who is oldest. But the governed must not act as Imām to the governor.' In sūr. ii. 118 Abraham is commissioned by God to be an Imām unto men.

[2] *rak'at*, Sell, p. 70 f.; Hughes, *s.v.* prayer, where the various postures of prayer are described and figured.

[3] J. P. Mahaffy, in *Class. Review*, 1909, p. 128.

whatever the language or nationality of the worshippers.[1] On Friday, the Muslim Sabbath, a sermon or sermons are preached in the mosque, of which the following is an illustration :—

> Praise be to God, the Creator of the earth and heavens, the Maker of light and darkness. I testify that there is no god but God. He is one. He has no partner. Know, O Believers! that this confession will save you from trouble and calamity. I testify that Muhammad, who wipes out error and infidelity, is the servant and Apostle of God. The mercy of God be on our Lord Muhammad, the Lord of Creation, and on his descendants, and on his Companions be grace and honour. . . . O God! help those who help the religion of Muhammad, and make us of their number. Make those wretched who corrupt it, and keep us aloof from all such. O Believers! truly God orders you to do justice, and to show kindness to your kindred. He orders you to abstain from infidelity, and from the greater and the lesser sins. God warns you. God is the Most High, the Most Glorious. God is Great![2]

The sermons are usually brief, for the Prophet declared that long sermons and short prayers would be a sign of the degeneracy of the last days. The form of prayer also that is used on Fridays is varied

[1] An interesting example is given by Dr. Sell, *Faith of Islām*[2], p. 301 ff., of an authoritative judgement delivered at Madras in February, 1880, on the case of a man who had ventured himself to use, and to recommend the use of Hindustani in the public prayers. He is formally declared to be 'an infidel, an atheist, and a wanderer from the truth. He also causes others to wander.' As Dr. Sell very justly adds, this man might have been guilty of open and flagrant sin and yet remained in Islām; 'but to approach God in prayer through the medium of his mother-tongue was an offence so great that he could only be regarded as an outcast.'

[2] *Faith of Islām*[2], p. 269; where further examples will be found. The choice of Friday was apparently again determined by the wish to avoid coincidence with the Jewish or Christian days of rest. Persian influence has been recognised here also, but doubtfully; see Goldziher, *l.c.*, p. 145 f.

and more elaborate; but otherwise the day is not kept as different from ordinary days. Prayer should be made with the face turned towards Mecca, and must be preceded by certain rites of purification, which consist in washings of parts of the body in a prescribed order and manner.[1] The legal ablutions may be shortened in circumstances of danger, or when leisure fails; and they may be performed with sand, if water is unobtainable or can only be procured with difficulty. Special ritual also and prayers are appointed to be used on special occasions, such as a festival or a funeral, at times of public calamity, or during war.

Much stress was laid by Muhammad on the virtue and obligation of fasting. This is of great merit, if practised voluntarily at any time; but it is especially incumbent on every true Muslim to fast as a matter of religious duty during Ramadhān,[2] the ninth month of the Muhammadan year, the sacred month in which the Qur'ān was sent down to the lowest heaven.[3] So holy is this month that the Prophet declared that in it the gates of paradise are open, the gates of hell shut, and the devil chained. Children are entirely exempt from the obligation to fast, as also the insane[4]; sick persons and travellers may defer the keeping of it, on condition that they observe an

Fasting

[1] O Believers! when ye address yourselves unto prayer, then wash your faces and your hands up to the elbow, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles; sūra v. 8.

[2] Apparently so named because it fell at the height of the hot season; *ramidha*, to blaze, be very hot. Since the Muhammadan year is lunar, the month of fasting falls to be observed in each of the seasons in turn.

[3] sūr. ii. 180 ff.; cp. *supra*, p. 791.

[4] cp. Westermarck, *Moral Ideas*, i. p. 271.

equal number of days at another time. All others must abstain entirely from food and drink between the hours of sunrise and sunset, but may feast at pleasure during the night. The commencement of the fast in the morning is defined as the time when a white thread can be distinguished from a black.[1] When Ramadhān falls in the hot summer months this regulation bears very hardly on poor persons and those engaged in manual labour. The rich and well-to-do classes by sleeping most of the day feel little inconvenience.

The Ramadhān fast alone is compulsory upon Muslims. Voluntary fasting however at other seasons is meritorious, especially on the tenth day of Muharram,[2] the first month of the year, and in the month of Shawwāl that follows on Ramadhān, during the six days after the festival of *'Īdu'l-Fitr*, in which is celebrated the close of the great fast. There are also days of the week set apart for fasting, Monday and Thursday; and the three middle days of each month. The former at least are rarely kept at the present time.[3]

Almsgiving

Almsgiving, *zakāt*, is also a matter of legal regulation in Islām.[4] Over and above however the gifts demanded by law are those dictated by pure benevolence, or a desire to win Divine favour. These last are termed *ṣadaqah*, 'righteousness' or

[1] sūr. ii. 183.

[2] The observance of the tenth day is perhaps a reminiscence or imitation of the Jewish Day of Atonement.

[3] Sell, *op. cit.*, pp. 279 ff., 316 ff.; Westermarck, *Moral Ideas*, ii. p. 313 ff.; Hughes, *s.v.*

[4] sūr. ii. 77, 273 ff., etc.

'sanctity'; cp. Heb. צְדָקָה. Every Muslim of full age, who is free and in possession of all his faculties, and who has held his property for a full year, is liable to the tax. Debtors however are not required to pay; and certain kinds of property are exempt, as the tools employed in trade, personal slaves or attendants, etc. A part, varying from a fortieth to a fifth, is taken, and devoted to the relief of the poor and needy, or to other charitable objects. No exacting inquiry however is made as to the amount which should be rendered; and under certain circumstances the provider of the alms may himself distribute it as he will. Under ordinary circumstances various limitations are laid down as to the purposes for which the *zakāt* may be employed; for example, it may not be given to near relatives, or to an infidel, or for the building of a mosque; neither is it exacted from the very poor.[1] The provision thus made by Muhammad for the help and support of the destitute among his followers, and on the whole faithfully observed by Muslims at the present day, is worthy of all praise.

The last of the pillars of the faith is the *Hajj*, or sacred pilgrimage to Mecca; and the Musalmān who has made the pilgrimage thenceforth bears the honourable title of Hājji, and is looked upon with much respect by his co-religionists. A few Europeans, from motives of curiosity and at the risk of their lives, have visited the sacred temple in the pilgrim garb. It is doubtful

Hajj

[1] The classes of persons on whom zakāt may legally be bestowed are enumerated as follows:—faqīrs, slaves, debtors, the poor who have no property of their own, the collectors of the alms, and travellers. Zakāt may further be employed 'in the cause of God,' *i.e.* for warfare against the infidel. Sūr. ix. 60. Cp. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 283 ff.; Westermarck, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 551.

however whether their presence was known to the true Muhammadan worshippers or their disguise penetrated. Sir Richard F. Burton made the pilgrimage in the disguise of a *hakīm*, or native doctor, in the years 1853–54, and has given a full and picturesque account of his adventures; and a narrative of the recent experiences of an educated Musalmān will be found in *With the Pilgrims to Mecca*, by Hadji Khan, M.R.A.S., and W. Sparroy, London and New York, 1905. Passages of the Qur'ān in which the pilgrimage is enjoined belong exclusively to the later Medina sūras, *e.g.* ii. 153, 192 ff., iii. 91 f., v. 2, xxii. 28 ff. This would naturally be the case; the detailed regulations for the pilgrimage would not be laid down until the Prophet felt sure of his position, and that his possession of the holy cities and of the routes leading thereto was beyond dispute.[1]

The actual rites of pilgrimage must be performed in the month *Dhū'l Hijjat*, 'possessor of the pilgrimage,' the twelfth month of the year; all the necessary preparations however may be made in the months preceding. To visit Mecca at any time is meritorious, but every free Muslim, if it is at all within his power, must once at least during his lifetime make his way thither at the season of pilgrimage, must pass round the sacred shrine, and kiss the black stone built into the corner of the wall. Special garments are worn, special rites performed and forms of prayer observed; while the crowds, the dirt, and the heat combine to render the visit a peril not only to health but to life. Thousands of pilgrims undertake the journey every year from every part of the Muhammadan world. Princes and wealthy men go

[1] Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 287 ff.; Hughes, *s.v. Hajj*; Zwemer, ch. iii.

in state. Poorer persons measure the entire distance on foot, or travel on the decks of crowded and insanitary pilgrim ships.[1] Many never return, but perish by the way or in the holy city of exhaustion or disease. He who has thus visited Mecca is held in high honour ever after, and has ensured for himself a place in Paradise.[2]

Of the appointed rites of the pilgrimage eight are absolutely obligatory, and must be performed. A distinction however is made between three, which are said to be *farz*, the omission of which altogether invalidates the pilgrimage, and the guilty party is declared to be an infidel, and no longer a true Muslim; the five others are *wājib* merely, and their neglect, though culpable in the highest degree, does not justify a charge of infidelity. Further customs or observances rest on *sunnat* or tradition, and are usual and meritorious, but not necessary to the due fulfilment of the duties of the pilgrim.

The *farz* duties are, (1) The wearing of the *ihrām*, or sacred pilgrim habit. It consists of two light cloths, usually of white cotton, which must be new, each 6 ft. by 3½ ft.; one is thrown over the back and left shoulder, leaving the right arm and shoulder bare, the other wrapped round the loins and falling below the knees. Sandals also are worn on the feet.[3]

(2) The visit to *Arafāt*, the Mount of Recognition, twelve

[1] The opening of the railway to Medina (Sept. 1, 1908) and its future extension to Mecca will in course of time introduce great changes into the conditions of the pilgrim traffic. A descriptive note on the line appeared in the *Geogr. Journal*, Sept., 1908, p. 305 f.; and an article by F. R. Maunsell, *ib.*, Dec., 1908, p. 570 ff.

[2] The regard with which Muhammadans look upon the sacred pilgrimage, and the importance attached to a due fulfilment of its rites, are curiously illustrated by a memorial presented by a number of Musalmāns in India to the Government, as late as the year 1895, relative to a proposed restriction on sanitary grounds of the pilgrim traffic:—'The Hajj is regarded and universally believed as an obligatory performance by all Muhammadans. In fact we believe it to be the surest way to salvation and paradise.' Cp. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 288, and note.

[3] Hadji Khan and Sparroy, *op. cit.*, p. 93 f.

miles east of Mecca, so called because Adam, journeying from Ceylon where he had been cast after the expulsion from Paradise, found Eve there. It is obligatory to remain on Arafāt during the recital of the noon and afternoon prayers on the ninth of the month, and to listen to a discourse.

(3) The circuit of the Ka'abah, with the appropriate ceremonies and prayers.

The *wājib* duties are, (1) On the sixth day to run seven times between Mounts Safā and Marwah, two hills in the sacred territory of Mecca, reciting prayers on each (sūr. ii. 153).

(2) At the close of the ninth day, instead of returning to Mecca, to stay for the night at *al-Mugdalifah*, half-way between Arafāt and Minā, three miles from Mecca.

(3) The casting of stones, seven at each of the three pillars in Minā.[1]

(4) An extra circuit of the Ka'abah, incumbent on all strangers and non-residents.

(5) Shaving the head and paring the nails, after which the pilgrim habit is exchanged for an ordinary dress.

It is usual to remain three days longer at Mecca, making another circuit of the Ka'abah, and re-visiting Minā, with repetition of the stoning of the pillars. Thence the pilgrims go to Medina, visiting the Prophet's mosque and tomb

Shī'ah Muslims, but not Sunnīs, allow the pilgrimage to be made by proxy. Moreover, it is always an act of merit to provide the necessary means for the pilgrimage for those who are unable themselves through poverty to bear the cost.

[1] The original significance of the stone-throwing is not easy to determine, and a great variety of opinion has been expressed. With the other customs of the pilgrimage it was taken over by Muhammad from ancient Arabian practice. Probably it represents some ceremony of demon expulsion. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 296 f.; Burton, ii. p. 203 ff.; Sparroy, p. 247 f.

NUMEROUS sects exist amongst the Muhammadans, separated from one another at least as widely as those of Christendom. The greatest schism, that of the *Shī'ahs*, or 'followers,' had its origin in a dispute with reference to the succession of the early Khalīfs. The orthodox *Sunnīs*[1] recognise the first three Khalīfs as the true successors of Muhammad; and these form the vast majority of Muhammadans throughout the world. The Shī'ahs reject the claims of Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othmān, and maintain that Ali alone had the right to be heir to the position of ruler of the Faithful.[2] Both parties claim to be orthodox, and regard their opponents as heretics. The Persians as a nation adopted the Shī'ah doctrines, and a few individuals and villages will be found holding the same views in the north of India, principally in Oudh, also near Mosul on the Tigris, and elsewhere. But their total number is estimated not to exceed 15 or 16 millions, as against the 140 or 150 millions of the Sunnīs.

Shī'ahs

In the belief of the Shī'ahs the first lawful successor of Muhammad was his son-in-law Ali, and the three so-called Khalīfs who preceded him were usurpers. The Khalīfate is and must be hereditary, and is vested by Divine right in Ali and his descendants. This theory of the Divine right of Ali had its supporters

The Imām

[1] Sunnī, one of the law or custom, a 'traditionalist.'

[2] An intermediate position is sometimes adopted, *e.g.* in *CMSI*, 1898, p. 598, a converted Muhammadan describes himself as having been a *Tafzeelea* at heart, *i.e.* one who though a *Sunnī* thinks it would have been better if Ali had occupied the first place.

even during his lifetime; but it was the intense feeling aroused by the events at Karbalā that gave it force, and converted an academic belief into a political and party organisation. To Ali was imparted the 'light,' which in the form of a ray of Divine glory was united to the body of Muhammad; and from him this light was passed on in the line of his descendants to the true *Imāms*, or 'leaders' of the people.[1] These last, by virtue of thus sharing in the nature of the Prophet himself, are sinless and perfect, absolutely wise and all-knowing. This doctrine of the Imām is the most important distinguishing feature of Shī'ah belief as compared with the orthodox Sunnīs. The latter make use of the term indeed, but in a much looser, wider signification; holding that besides Muhammad himself with his immediate successors, and the four great Imāms, the founders of the four schools of jurisprudence, there has ever been and still exists an indeterminate number of lesser Imāms, any appointed leader of prayer in a mosque being entitled to the name. Nor are the Imāms of the Sunnīs regarded as necessarily more holy than other men, or worthy of any special veneration.

[1] The doctrine of the 'Light of Muhammad' is amongst the most remarkable in Muslim tradition. Extracts from Arabic writers on the subject will be found in Koelle, p. 247 ff. According to the usual account the *Nūr-i-Muhammad* was the first work of the creative power of the Almighty, and from it, after an interval of 70,000 years, were derived the Light and the Spirits of the prophets. The doctrine as taught by Muhammad is supposed to be a confused recollection or misunderstanding of the Jewish teaching on the subject of the Shekhinah, δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ. Cp. Clair-Tisdall, *Sources of Islām*, p. 86 f.; Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 97, and *Essays on Islām*, p. 13; Hughes, *s.v. Haqīqatu'l Muhammadīyah*. The conception is essentially mystical and Sūfiistic.

The Shī'ahs, on the other hand, teach that there have been only twelve Imāms, of whom Ali was the first. Their names are as follows, in direct descent from the son-in-law of the Prophet :—'Alī, Hasan, Husain, Zainu'l-'Abid-dīn, Muhammad al-Bāqir, Ja'far as-Sādiq, Mūsā al-Kāzim, 'Alī ibn Mūsā, ar-Razā, Muhammad at-Taqī, 'Alī an-Naqī, Hasan al-'Asharī, Abū'l Qāsim or Imām al-Mahdī. The last Imām lived towards the end of the second century after the Hijrah, and is said to have disappeared in a mosque and underground chamber at Sāmarrā.[1] He is however in reality still alive, though in concealment; and he will eventually re-appear as *Al-Mahdī*, the 'Guided,' who will restore purity of faith and life to the earth. Of him Muhammad is said to have prophesied :—'"There will be twelve Khalīfs after me; the first is my brother, the last is my son." "O messenger of God," said the people, "and who is thy brother?" The Prophet replied, "Ali." "And thy son?" "Mahdī, who will fill the earth with justice, even though it be covered with tyranny. He will come at last. Jesus will then appear, and follow him. The light of God will illuminate the earth, and the empire of the Imām will extend from east to west."' There have been numerous pretenders to the office of Mahdī. This doctrine of the Imāmat is regarded by the Shī'ahs as one of the pillars of the faith; the theory of its Divine origin is founded on sūr. ii. 118,

[1] Guy le Strange, *Eastern Caliphate*, p. 56; he will re-appear at Hillah, *ib.*, p. 72. Cp. Browne, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 246 n; Sell, p. 99. His tomb is shown at Mashhad or Meshed in Eastern Persia, where is a splendid mosque dedicated to his memory, to which large numbers of pilgrims resort from every part of the country. In the estimation of Shī'ah Muslims, it is the most sacred spot in the world after Mecca and Karbalā the place of the martyrdom of Husain.

and the commission given to Abraham.[1] While the office is in abeyance, the authority and rights thereof centre provisionally in the Mujtahidūn.[2]

The main distinctions therefore between the Shī'ahs and orthodox Musalmāns may be said to be two: (1) Their belief in the Divine right of 'Alī and his descendants, as against those especially who held the office of Khalīf, but were not of the family of the Prophet; and (2) the teaching with respect to the Imām. Other peculiarities are the doctrine of the present and perpetual existence of Mujtahidūn and the observance of Muharrām. Besides these they teach and practise a kind of religious compromise or reserve, according to which it is lawful to conceal at any time their real sentiments and faith, if the open avowal would expose them to inconvenience or suffering; and in opposition to the Sunnīs they regard Parsīs, as well as Jews and Christians, as in possession of a true Divine revelation.[3]

Doctrinal Distinctions

Among the numerous sects or sub-sects of the Shī'ahs the most important and historically influential is that of the Ismā'īlians. It is sometimes known as the 'Sect of the Seven,' to distinguish it from the 'Sect of the Twelve,' the predominant Shī'ah community. A very similar sect is that of the Hurūfīs.[4] The Ismā'īlians take their name from Ismā'īl, the eldest son of the sixth Imām, whom they

Isma'ilians

[1] Cp. *supra*, pp. 729 f., 839 n.

[2] *supra*, p. 819 ff.

[3] Hughes, *s.v.* Shī'ahs; Sell, *op. cit.*, ch. iii.; Browne, vol. i., 238 ff. and *passim*.

[4] E. G. Browne, in *JRAS*, 1898, p. 61 ff., *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, i. pp. 405, 423.

hold to be the true heir to the rights and office of Imām, although rejected by other Shī'ahs in favour of his younger brother Mūsā.[1] Ismā'īl died before his father Ja'far as-Sādiq; and on the latter's death in 765 A.D., the Shī'ahs became divided, some following Mūsā, and others supporting the claims of Muhammad, son of Ismā'īl. There were also other Shī'ah sects, of less moment and influence, who traced their Imāms through Hasan, the elder brother of Husain, or through the former's half-brother Muhammad. The doctrines professed by all these sects were essentially similar, based upon belief in incarnation, revelation and the inner light, and metempsychosis, combined with an excessive reverence for the Imām. Similar or even the same doctrines distinguish the heretical sects of Persia to the present day.[2]

Concealed Imāms; Karmathians

After the time of Ja'far, according to the teaching of the Ismā'īlians there began a succession of 'Concealed Imāms,' of whom one is always in the world, although he may be unrecognised and unknown. It is in this particular alone, the doctrine of the 'Concealed Imām,' that this sect differs from the main body of the Shī'ahs. From this teaching there originated various secret sects and heretical movements, notably the revolt of the Karmathians in the fourth century A.H.; when a large part of the empire of orthodox Islām was overrun by these sectaries, and Mecca

[1] The account given of their origin is that Ismā'īl was one day seen intoxicated in public. Accordingly his father disinherited him, and appointed Mūsā in his stead. Some of the people refused to accept this decision, holding that drunkenness was no bar to the position and divine rights of an Imām.

[2] E. G. Browne, *op. cit.*, i. pp. 310 ff., 406 ff.; Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 99 ff., and *Essays*, p. 147 ff.

itself captured and given up to plunder.[1] The famous 'Veiled Prophet of Khurasan,' al-Muqanna', towards the end of the eighth century of our era, was one of several leaders who combined religious fervour with political ambition, and about this time spread unrest throughout the Muhammadan world. He claimed to be an incarnation of the Divine, and is said to have thrown himself into the flames, after an independent rule of twelve or fourteen years in Transoxiana, when surrounded and defeated by the troops of the Khalīf, in order that the people might see him die a death worthy of a god.[2]

Fatimids: Druses

The Fātimid Dynasty also in North Africa and Egypt was descended from a branch of the same sect.[3] Established by a professed Mahdī, Obeidu'llah, at the beginning of the tenth century A.D., they founded the city of Cairo, and were only overthrown by Saladin in 1171. From these again the Druses in the Hauran and mountains of Lebanon received their teaching and peculiar beliefs.

The Druses, or Druzes, derive their name from Hamza ad-Duruzī, the Persian minister of the sixth Fātimid Khalīf, al-Hākim (996–1020 A.D.). Al-Hākim occupies in their profession of faith a similar place to that of the last of the Imāms in the ordinary Shī'ah creed; he was the last and greatest of the manifestations of the Deity, and has vanished from sight, to re-appear in due time to the discomfiture of the foes of the faith, and to establish a world-empire. They are said to observe seven precepts of morality and religion, which their founder enjoined upon them, including charity towards their brethren, and entire submission to the will of God; and to be guided in matters of faith by a priestly and privileged class, both male and female, who alone are in possession of the

[1] Browne, *op. cit.*, i. pp. 401–404.

[2] Browne, p. 318 ff.

[3] *supra*, p. 782; Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 396 ff.

knowledge of the esoteric and more secret mysteries of their religion. Their political history has been troubled; but since 1860, when the British and French Governments intervened in consequence of cruel and extensive massacres of the Christian population, there has been comparative peace.[1]

From the same stock sprang the followers of *Hasan*, the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' so famous in the days of the Crusades. These were the *Hashshāshīn*, or Assassins, devotees of the drug *ḥashshīsh*, who from their strong fortress of Alamūt, south of the Caspian, fell impartially upon Christian and Muslim, and made their name a terror throughout Syria. The sect flourished in Persia and Syria mainly from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. The followers of Agha Khan, who claims to be a lineal descendant of Hasan, are still found in Western India and Persia, but their numbers are small and decreasing.[2]

Assassins

The principal festival of the Shī'ahs, which they are alone in observing, is that of the *Muharram*,[3] the first month of the Muhammadan year. The earlier half of this month is kept in memory of the death of Husain, son of Ali on the battlefield of Karbalā, 680 A.D. Various ceremonies are observed, and a kind of symbolic representation carried out, intended to recall the circumstances of his death.

Muharram Festival

[1] Hughes, *s.v.* and the references there given; Sell, *Essays*, ch. iv.; Browne, *op. cit.*, pp. 398, 409.

[2] Sell, p. 123; C. R. Conder, *Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, London, 1897, p. 229 f.; and especially D. S. Margoliouth in *ERE*, vol. ii. pp. 138–41.

[3] From the root *ḥarima*, to be unlawful or forbidden.

The forms of observance are modified slightly in different countries. The annual practices in India on the occasion of the Muharram are described by Dr. Sell in *Faith of Islām*. These all culminate in evening assemblies in booths or tents erected for the purpose, sometimes in permanent buildings, when sermons are delivered in honour of Ali and his sons, the history and circumstances of the death of Husain are related, and the men and boys, often frantically excited, stand in rows beating their breasts in real or feigned sorrow. On the tenth day, the day on which Husain was slain, processions carrying banners and standards go about the streets with wood and tinsel models or frameworks, *ta'zīah*, representing the tomb of Husain at Karbalā. The tenth day of this month is by the Sunnīs also regarded as sacred, as the day when Adam and Eve, heaven and hell, were created.

Other Sects

Of the numerous other sects of Islām, some of which have wielded an influence and excite an interest out of all proportion to their numbers, three deserve special notice: (1) the *Sūfīs*, mystics and pantheists, from among whom have arisen the various orders of darwīshes; (2) the *Wahhābīs*, a military and fanatical reform movement in Arabia at the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries; and (3) the *Bābīs* or *Bahāīs* of Persia. Some knowledge of these three at least is essential to a right understanding of the present position and relationships of Islām. Two of them, it will be noted, the most thoughtful and permanent, have their source and home in Persia, that rich nursing-mother of Muhammadan heresies.

[1] Sell, p. 306 ff.; Hughes, *s.v.*

The origin and meaning of the name *Sūfī* has been disputed. The most probable explanation derives the word from the Arabic *ṣūf*, 'wool'[1]; it has reference, therefore, to the garments worn by the primitive teachers or professors of asceticism. Others regard it as a loan-word from the Greek σοφία. According to one tradition, which certainly cannot lay claim to inherent probability, the sect was founded by a woman within the first century after the Hijrah. There is considerable likeness between the mystical teaching of the Sūfīs and early Gnostic theories, both doubtless drawing from the same source, the dualism and religious speculation of the ancient Persian faith. Thus Sūfiism teaches a doctrine of emanations. All souls, all beings, proceed from the one Divine soul, and to Him they will return. The supreme duty of man therefore is to love God, who is Himself perfect love, and thus by abstraction and meditation on His nature and unity to hasten the final absorption into the one Divine essence. All religion further is a matter of indifference except so far as it promotes this great end; Islām is the best religion, because it most assists man to attain union with God. The Divine Being alone has a real existence. All mere external and physical things are illusions. And the Sūfī who has reached the goal of oneness with God possesses an 'inner Light,' an infallible guide, in comparison with which the dictates of reason and sense are misleading, and require to be ignored. Since moreover God is the sole reality, all actions good or evil are to be ascribed to Him; and moral responsibility, as far as man is concerned, does not exist. In harmony with this

Sūfīs = wool

[1] The cloak worn by the modern inhabitants of Palestine is *'aba ṣūf* or 'woollen *'aba*' (Macalister in *PEFQ*, 1905, p. 346).

teaching, many of the Sūfīs have in fact professedly cast off all the restraints of morality and religion.

Origin and History of Sūfī Doctrines

On the origin of the doctrines themselves and their rapid spread and popularity in Persia different views have been held. They have been traced on the one hand to the East, to Indian speculation, with which in some of its forms they have much in common; or regarded as the outcome of Neo-platonic philosophy meeting the dreamy mysticism of the Orient. It is not improbable, however, that they were in the main an independent and natural product of minds which, possessed of similar characteristics, have all the world over tended to similar results. The essential features of mystical doctrine are the same in every age and country; and for the form which they received in Persia it is not necessary to seek outside of Persia itself. Foreign influences without doubt contributed later; but the early stages were developed and carried through under native inspiration.

Sūfī doctrines moreover are far from being uniform and homogeneous. The saying is quoted that 'the ways of God are numerous as the souls of men'; and the diversity is illustrated in the expositions of Sūfī writers themselves. In the earliest period a spirit of protest against a merely legal or external service prevailed, the longing for secret heart communion with the Divine, and a tendency to ascetic renunciation of the world with its pomps and vanities.[1] Later the desire for fellowship and union with God led to pantheistic theories, God alone was found to be real in the intimacy of the soul with Him, and the external

[1] Cp. R. A. Nicholson in *ERE*, ii. p. 102 f

world was a fleeting shadow; and under the influence of a series of great writers and thinkers, of whom al-Ghazzālī was the foremost, a more or less well-defined and systematized body of doctrines was evolved, which became the creed and guided the practice of the devout Sūfī. The essential principles however of life and teaching were from first to last the same, profoundly mystical and pantheistic.[1]

The works of Sūfī writers contain much that is lofty and beautiful. Persian poetry in particular is almost entirely expressive of Sūfī aspirations and feelings. The greatest of the Sūfī poets was Jalālu'd-Dīn in the latter part of the thirteenth century.[2] It is maintained that the lusciousness and sentimentality of such poetry is not intended to be taken literally, but is to be understood in a figurative and spiritual sense. Sūfī influence is also markedly present in some Arabic writers, and has been supposed to have reacted through Musalmān teaching on certain schools of Indian thought.[3]

In the pursuit of the great end of absorption into or union with the Divine, eight stages or degrees (*maqāmāt*) are defined, namely Service, Love, Abstraction or inward meditation, Knowledge, Ecstasy, Truth, Union with God, and finally Extinction.[4] This is the 'path' (*tarīqat*) along which the Sūfī mystic advances to his final goal. The last station or degree, in which the 'traveller' (*sālik*) becomes finally and for ever one with the Divine

[1] The religious teacher and philosopher named was born in Khurasan, A.D. 1058, and died there in his native town after an active and changeful life at the age of fifty-three; see *Confessions of al-Ghazzālī* in 'Wisdom of the East Series,' London, 1909; E. G. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 293 f.

[2] Browne, *op. cit.*, pp. 416, 437, and vol. ii. pp. 515–22.

[3] Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 438; G. A. Grierson, in *ERE*, ii. p. 550b.

[4] Cp. Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.* Sūfī; Sell, p. 114 f., and *Essays*, pp. 16, 24 ff.; R. A. Nicholson, *ut sup.*, p. 104; T. Duka, *JRAS*, 1904, p. 139 ff.

object of his love, is reached only in death. Elaborate rules are laid down for the attainment of each degree, and a course of life prescribed, while those who have advanced far in the 'path' are held in high honour. Such rules consist generally of directions for prayer. When the last step is gained, all external observances are abandoned as unnecessary. The soul is now in full possession of the truth and in union with the Divine, and remains absorbed in ecstasy and contemplation, until by death it is set free from the bonds and entanglements of this world and reaches its final end in God.

Sūfī doctrines are thus summed up in Hughes' *Dictionary*, *s.v.*

(1) God alone exists; He is in all things, and all things in Him.

(2) All things are emanations from Him, and have no real existence apart from Him.

(3) All religions are indifferent. They however serve a purpose as leading to realities. The most profitable in this respect is Islām, of which Sūfiism is the true philosophy.

(4) There is no distinction between good and evil; for God is the author of all.

(5) It is God who determines the will of man; man therefore is not free in his actions.

(6) The soul existed before the body, in which it is confined as in a cage. Death is to be desired, for it is then the Sūfī returns to the bosom of Divinity.

(7) Apart from the grace of God no man can attain to this spiritual union; it may however be obtained by fervent prayer.

(8) The principal duty of the Sūfī is meditation on the unity of God, the remembrance of the Divine names, and progressive advancement in the *tarīqat*, or journey of life, so as to attain union with God.

This course of life, likened by the Sūfīs themselves to a journey, is usually followed as a solitary *faqīr*, or in one or other of the *Darwīsh* orders, of which

there are large numbers throughout the Muslim world.[1] The city of Constantinople alone is said to contain two hundred monasteries.

Darwīshes

These orders, distinguished among themselves by peculiarities of habit and dress, are of two great classes, those with the Law and those without the Law. The former observe the legal directions and regulations of Islām, the hours of prayer, fasting, etc. The latter regard themselves as above all law, do not even frequent the mosques to pray, teach that the doctrines of Paradise and Hell are only allegories, and spend their lives professedly in meditation and spiritual exercises, but often in mere sensual indulgence. Most of the orders are of Shī'ah origin, and have more or less pronounced Shī'ah and Sūfī sympathies. Between the members of the monastic orders and the *'Ulamā*, the men of learning and authority who hold an official position in the State, there is little in common, and the relation of the two parties is often one of veiled hostility. There are also wandering darwīshes, who live an independent and often extremely ascetic life. Among these are to be reckoned the *faqīrs* of India and other countries.

The number of religious orders does not fall far short of one hundred. Of some of these the foundation may be traced back to the very early years of Islām; the most recent came into existence in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and within a very short time attained a position of commanding influence.[2] The most important orders are the

[1] Persian *dar*, 'door,' *i.e.* one who seeks food and alms from door to door; *faqīr* is Arabic=poor, and the term is understood to refer not to poverty in worldly goods, but to humility of spirit.

[2] *infra*, p. 862 f.

Qādirīyah, whose founder 'Abdu'l Qādir al-Jīlānī (born 1078 A.D.), lived and taught at Baghdad[1]; the members of the order are found throughout the north of India, and in North Africa and the Sūdān, as well as in the Turkish Empire, and hold an honoured place in Islām: the *Maulāwīyah*, the so-called dancing Darwīshes, who owe their origin to Jalālu'd Dīn Rūmi,[2] and who are presided over to the present day by a lineal descendant of their founder; the order is very popular and wealthy, and their ritual and mystic dance is said in some respects to resemble that of the ancient Galli, the priests of Cybele and Attis[3]: the *Rufā'īyah*, or howling Darwīshes, of Cairo and elsewhere; they derive their name from Ahmad ar-Rufā'i, of Baghdad (*flor. c.* 1180 A.D.), and claim the power to perform miraculous feats with live coals, etc.[4]: and the *Bakhtāshīyah*, an order largely military and recruited from the ranks of the soldiers, established by Hājji Bakhtāsh in 1357 A.D.; they carry a mystic girdle, which is tied and unloosed seven times, while the wearer repeats seven vows of continence and self-devotion.[5]

In organisation and control the monastic fraternities

[1] Life of al-Qādir in *ERE*, i. p. 9 f.

[2] *supra*, p. 857.

[3] W. M. Ramsay, in *Expos.*, Nov. 1905, p. 356 f.

[4] Their exhibitions at Cairo have often been witnessed and described. An account of a recent performance at Sarajevo, in Herzegovina, is given by P. Henderson, *British Officer in the Balkans*, 1909, p. 108 ff.

[5] E. Sell, *Religious Orders of Islām*, in *Essays*, p. 99 ff., and art. in *Harvest Field*, 1908, p. 129 ff.; R. A. Nicholson, in *ERE*, ii. p. 105; Hughes, *s.v. faqir*; G. Bonet-Maury, in *Transactions of the Third Intern. Congress for the Hist. of Religions*, Oxford, 1908, vol. ii. p. 339 ff., a comparison between the religious orders of Islām and those of Catholicism.

of Islām are regulated in a manner essentially similar to the Christian militant orders. The head of each monastery or *Zawīyah* is the *Muqaddim*, under whom subordinate officials have charge of the various departments of monastic activity, the religious services, management of the lands and other property, external enterprise and propaganda, etc. The Muqaddim meet at intervals, to discuss the common interests of the order, to admit new members, to decide points of orthodoxy, or for other purposes. Over all is the *Shaikh*, who visits the monasteries periodically, and is invested with supreme and absolute power. The monks themselves are known as *Ikhwān*, 'brethren,' or *Mūrīd*, 'disciples'; and submit to life-long vows of abstinence and unquestioning obedience to their superiors. They carry rosaries, consisting of ninety-nine beads, one for each of the names or titles of God.[1] Attached to the monasteries also there are usually lay brethren, who render service, but do not undertake any vow, and are free to come and go as they will. Each order moreover has its special *Dhikr*, 'memorial' or form of prayer, which is recited daily by every member, and forms part of the daily service.[2] The saintly *faqīr* or monk is known after death as a *walī*, 'friend' or 'associate' of God; and his tomb frequently becomes a centre of pilgrimage, at which his help is invoked, and miracles of healing etc. are wrought. Candidates for admission have usually to pass through a long and severe probation, designed to test their sincerity and devotion. At the

Organisation

[1] *supra*, p. 829; cp. *JRAS*, 1904, p. 135, and Hadji Khan and Sparroy, p. 169.

[2] See Hughes, *s.v. Zikr*; G. Swan, art. in *Moslem World*, 1912, p. 380 ff.

close of the noviciate a ceremony of initiation takes place, the details of which vary in the different orders. In all almsgiving and fasting with prayer take a principal place.

The most important of the more recent monastic orders, and probably by far the most influential, is that of the *Sanūsīyah* (Senoussi).

Sanūsīyah

Its emissaries are said to be actively working in every part of the world where Muhammadans are found, and to penetrate far beyond these borders for purposes of observation and proselytism. It is also the most hostile to Europeans and European civilisation, and veils its progress and movements in so much secrecy that accurate information is difficult to obtain. There are monasteries of the order however throughout North Africa and the Sahara, as far south as Timbuktu, in Arabia and Turkey, and in the Far East in the Malay Archipelago. The founder of the sect, Muhammad ibn Sanūsi, was born at Algiers in the year 1791 A.D., and claimed to be a descendant of the Khalīf 'Alī. After studying at Fez and Mecca, he made his way in middle life to Cairo, and there became a member of the Qādirīyah order of Darwīshes.[1] On the death of the Shaikh in 1833, he claimed the right to be appointed his successor, and his claim being resisted seceded from the order, and after a period of preparation and active propaganda formally established, about ten years later a new order, which he called by his own name, and which rapidly gained influence and numerous followers. In 1855 the head quarters of the sect were established at Jaghbūb, an oasis in the Libyan desert, between Egypt and Tripoli, whither students made their way from all parts of Africa

[1] *supra*, p. 860.

and the Muhammadan world, and a powerful and far-reaching organisation was developed. Four years later Shaikh Sanūsi died, and was buried in the mosque at Jaghbūb, where his tomb became a great centre of pilgrimage. His son 'Alī succeeded him, and late in the century, on account, it is said, of the nearer approach of the hated Western civilisation, the head quarters of the sect were transferred to the more southern oasis of Kufra, whence the same active work of training and propaganda was carried on. Many apprehensions have been expressed as to the trouble which the fanaticism and warlike tendencies of the sect might cause, but after the death of the son and successor of the founder its influence is said to have to a large extent decreased, and the probability of alarm or widespread disturbance due to their activity is considerably lessened.[1] The present Shaikh is the nephew of Ali, and succeeded him about ten years ago. He is said to be peace-loving, and to discourage warlike enterprise.

Wahhābīs

The sect of the *Wahhābīs* took its rise in a protest against later developments of thought and practice in Islām, which were looked upon as a decline from the pure and simple first principles of Muhammad and the Companions. The founder of the sect, Muhammad ibn Abdu'l-Wahhāb, was born in the year 1691 A.D. in the Nejd, or desert region of Central Arabia, and became an earnest student of the law at Mecca and Medina, and also at Baghdad.[2] In all his teaching

[1] E. Sell, *Essays*, p. 127 ff., and *CMSI*, 1903, p. 19 ff.; cp. note in *Ch. Miss. Review*, 1907, p. 381 f.

[2] Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, p. 230 f.; Zwemer, *op. cit.*, p. 191 ff.; Sell, *Faith of Islām*[2], p. 152 ff.

he set himself to oppose the widespread degeneracy of the times, which appeared to him to be manifested especially in the reverence paid to saints and holy men, with pilgrimages and offerings at their tombs; and in the authority accorded to the four great Imāms of the four schools of jurisprudence. He and his followers called themselves Unitarians, declaring that all other Muhammadans were really polytheists, worshippers of great men such as Ali and of saints and angels. They professed, on the contrary, to found their system solely on the Qur'ān and the Sunnat. In their eyes the two chief sins were the paying of divine honours to a creature, and the introduction of changes into faith or practice not sanctioned by Muhammad himself. The Wahhābīs have been called the 'Protestants' of Islām; they uncompromisingly opposed themselves to all indulgence or concession to the spirit of the age, endeavouring to bring Muhammadanism back to the point at which its author left it, and to stereotype it there for all time.

The distinctive doctrines and practices of the Wahābīs, as enjoined by their founder, are as follows:—

(1) Prayer to prophet or saint is not permissible, nor is pilgrimage to their tombs allowed.

(2) Decorations to the mosque, such as minarets etc., are forbidden. The house of God should be simple and plain.

(3) Personal ornaments, as gold silver or jewels, and the use of scents are unlawful for the believer, and must be put away.

(4) Rosaries also are not to be used.

(5) Muhammad will intercede for his people at the last day; his work of intercession however does not begin until that time.

(6) The words of the Prophet in the Qur'ān with reference to the bodily motions, etc., of God are to be interpreted literally. All figurative or allegorical interpretations of these and other matters are excluded.

(7) It is the absolute duty of every Muslim to bear arms at all times and under all circumstances against the infidels, until these are either converted or destroyed.[1]

The successors of Abdu'l-Wahhāb endeavoured to propagate his doctrines by force of arms, and extended their power over the whole of Southern Arabia, destroying the tombs of the saints, the cupolas and ornaments of the mosques, and making bonfires of all the personal finery and jewels on which they could lay their hands. In the spring of 1803 Mecca itself was taken, and a rigid observance of the law, especially in regard to the five daily prayers in the mosque, enforced on all the inhabitants. The citizens' pipes, rosaries, silk dresses, etc., were collected and burnt in public. Later in the same year Medina was captured, and the tomb of the Prophet plundered of all its rich decorations.

The leader of the Wahhābī army in these campaigns was Sa'ūd, grandson of Muhammad ibn Sa'ūd, the founder of the Wahhābī Dynasty, who had been an influential Arabian chief and married the daughter of Abdu'l-Wahhāb. Sa'ūd died in 1814, and his son and successor Abdullah was taken prisoner in battle by the Turks, sent to Constantinople, and there executed in the year 1818. With him the military power and dominion of the Wahhābīs came practically to an end. But the dynasty still maintains a precarious and troubled existence, with its capital at Riadh, in Eastern Arabia. A leading part in this warfare was taken by Egyptian troops under Muhammad Ali and his son Ibrahim. The later history of northern and central Arabia has been dominated by the rivalry of the rulers of Riadh with the dynasty of the emīrs of Hail to the north-west, founded by Abdullah ibn Rashid, governor

[1] Cp. Zwemer, *op. cit.* p. 193.

of the province under the control of Riadh, in the middle of the nineteenth century, who succeeded in making himself independent. About the same time the Wahhābī capital was visited by Palgrave. Until the present century no European has been able to penetrate thither since his time, and of the details of dynastic changes, with their accompaniment of murder and exile, little is really known.[1]

Wahhābīs in India

The principles of the Wahhābīs spread widely at the beginning of the present century in the north of India; where a certain Said Ahmad Shāh travelled through the country from his head quarters at Patna, preaching the Wahhābī doctrines, which he had learnt while at Mecca on pilgrimage. He and his associates and successors endeavoured to emulate in the Panjāb the example of the Arabian chiefs, and to propagate their teaching by the sword. In this attempt they came into collision first with the Sikhs, in fighting against whom Said Ahmad was slain in 1831; and later with the British, by whom the remnant of his militant followers was defeated, and driven across the border into Afghanistan.

Ahlī-Hadīth

The modern representatives of the Wahhābīs in Bengal are known as Farazi, 'followers of the law,' or Ahlī-Hadīth, 'traditionists,' and are most strict in their observance of the hours of prayer, and the rules of religion generally. Their propaganda is carried on by means of pamphlets and printed books on a large scale and by itinerant missionaries, who disseminate their doctrines throughout the United Provinces and the Panjāb, and probably far and

[1] Captain Leachman was able to visit Riadh in Dec. 1912; but all earlier attempts to reach the town failed. See *Geogr Journal*, Feb. 1913, p. 147 f.

wide elsewhere in India, exhibiting at all times the utmost enthusiasm and zeal. The important Arabic College at Deoband, founded by Maulavi Muhammad Qasim in 1866, is actuated by Wahhābī principles, and its students in their later careers as teachers and preachers are among the most determined opponents of Christianity. A similar sect in the Panjāb was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Khan, who died at Lahore in May, 1908. They are known as Ahmadīyah, from the name of their founder.[1]

Wahhābīism therefore was an attempt at reform in the direction of the removal of abuses, which laid stress on the central doctrine of the Unity of God, and condemned as sinful all innovation or change. In the first of these respects the movement deserves sympathy and approval. But little as the violent methods of its leaders can command assent, the most serious difficulty is found in the consideration that success would have bound the whole Muhammadan world immovably fast by the rules and regulations formulated by one man for Arabian society at the beginning of the seventh century of our era. No progress, according to their theory, was either desirable or possible; and the steps taken in advance, whether in the development of doctrine or the harmonizing of practice with the needs of a new age, must be retraced. A reforming movement that thus sets back the hands of the clock of history a thousand years, and would nail them there, cannot command ultimate success, nor would its triumph be for the permanent good of mankind.

[1] For the recent history of the Wahhābī movement in India see *Indian Census Report*, 1901, p. 372 f.; W. Crooke, in *ERE*, ii. p. 499. There is an interesting account of the Deoband College in *CMSI*, 1900, p. 597 ff.; cp. *Gaz. of India*, *s.v.*

Bābīs

The most interesting and remarkable sect that has arisen in Islām within recent years is that of the *Bābīs* or *Bahāīs* of Persia, a people around whom some measure of mystery still clings as to their position and precise beliefs; for on account of the persecution to which they have been subjected, and the suspicion with which they are regarded, it is necessary for them to observe much caution in their intercourse with outsiders. The number of the Bābīs in Persia and the neighbouring countries was estimated by a recent writer at about five millions.[1] Since that date and with the more definite attempts at external propaganda the total in all probability is considerably higher. By origin and belief they are closely connected, as would naturally be expected, with the Shī'ahs. A fundamental tenet of the latter was the theory of the perpetual existence of the 'Concealed Imām.' This doctrine was developed and carried further by the Bābīs; who taught that after the disappearance of the twelfth Imām at the beginning of the fourth century after the Hijrah, 940–1 A.D., communication was for a time maintained with his disciples upon earth by means of intermediaries, inspired men, who were termed 'Doors.' Of these the last died about the year 1000 A.D., leaving no successor. The office of 'Door' therefore remained vacant until the beginning of the nineteenth century; when a certain Shaikh Ahmad, an ascetic and learned man, revived the doctrine, and gained a considerable following of men who made this the cardinal point of their creed. The greater number of his adherents some fifty years later accepted the founder of the sect of the Bābīs as rightful heir to this sacred office,

[1] *Le Bâbisme en Perse*, in *Actes du Pr. Congrès Intern. d'Hist. des Religions*, Paris, 1900, ii. 1 p. 94.

and as their own spiritual guide and director. But there are still remaining in Persia a few 'Shaikhīs,' who hold themselves distinct from the followers of the Bāb. This dogma, the belief in the existence of a continual succession of perfect men, who form channels of communication between the 'concealed Imām' and his living disciples, is called the fourth Pillar or Support of the Faith, and forms the basis of the claims of the Bāb and his successors to Divine inspiration and authority.[1]

Life of the Bāb

Mīrzā 'Alī Muhammad, the Bāb, was born at Shīrāz in Persia in the autumn of the year 1820 A.D. Occupied there for some years in business he afterwards removed to Karbalā, where he came into contact with the leader of the followers of Shaikh Ahmad, and employed himself in writing commentaries on

[1] Compare the summary of Shaikhī teaching from the lips of a doctor of the sect given by Mr. E. G. Browne in his *Year amongst the Persians*, a fascinating and instructive book. 'The Bâlâsarîs, or ordinary Shî'ites, assert that the essentials of religion are five, to wit, belief in the Unity of God (*tawhîd*), the Justice of God (*'adl*), the Prophetic Function (*nubuvvat*), the Imâmat (*imâmat*), and the Resurrection (*ma'âd*). Now we say that two of these cannot be reckoned as primary doctrines at all; for belief in the Prophet involves belief in his book and the teachings which it embodies, amongst which is the Resurrection; and there is no more reason for regarding a belief in God's Justice as a principal canon of faith than belief in God's Mercy, or God's Omnipotence, or any other of His attributes. Of their five principles or essentials (*uṣûl*), therefore, we accept only three; but to these we add another, namely, that there must always exist among the Musulmâns a "perfect Shî'ite" (*Shî'a-i-kâmil*), who enjoys the special guidance of the Imâms, and acts as a Channel of Grace (*Wâsita-i-feyz*) between them and their Church. This tenet we call "the Fourth Support" (*Rukn-i-râbi'*), or fourth essential principle of religion.' P. 474 f. This exposition would, I imagine, be accepted by any Bābī as setting forth in theory his own position and creed.

the Qur'ān. At the age of twenty-four he publicly announced himself as a spiritual guide, and assumed the title of the Bāb, or 'Door,'[1] winning many converts from among the more thoughtful and religious-minded of the people. His teaching excited great attention, and his influence extended so rapidly even amongst the doctors and heads of the Muhammadan faith that much opposition was aroused, public discussions were held, and after examination the Bāb himself was thrown into prison at Tabriz. His most famous convert at this time was a woman named Qurratu'l-'Ayn, 'Joy (refreshment) of the Eye,'[2] of great repute for her ability and beauty; who devoted her life to preaching and propagating his doctrines, composing poetical and other works on religious subjects, and finally suffered martyrdom for the cause at Teherān in 1852.[3]

The effect of the preaching of Qurratu'l-'Ayn, and of well-known mullahs converted to Bābīism, was to excite a violent persecution, which seized the occasion of the accession to power of the new

[1] On the origin of the name compare H. Arakélian in *Actes*, *ut sup.* p. 95 ff. His account is that when the Persian theologians declared the gate of knowledge and truth to be closed, Mīrzā 'Alī on the day of his public assumption of office, May 12, 1844, proclaimed that the gate was open and that he himself was that gate (Bāb). The day itself is observed by the Bābīs as a yearly festival. The date is otherwise given as May 23rd (*ERE*, ii. p. 300b).

[2] The name or phrase is found in the Qur'ān, *e.g.* sūr. xxviii. 8, 25, 74; and is in frequent use with reference to a son newly born.

[3] The facsimile of a letter from Qurratu'l-'Ayn with translation, together with facsimiles of the Bāb's autograph and other letters, is given in an Appendix to Mr. Browne's *New History of the Bâb*, Cambridge, 1893.

Shah in 1848 to strike at the Bāb himself and his most eminent followers; many of whom, with their leader, were put to death in this and the succeeding year. Four years later an attempt was made to assassinate the Shah, in which the Bābīs were charged with being implicated. Whether the charge were true or not their enemies took advantage of the hostile feeling aroused, and many of the Bābīs, including women and children, were tortured and slain, refusing the life offered to them at the price of recantation. Other persecutions have broken out at intervals, but none so fierce as that of 1852; and from Yezd as late as the summer of the year 1903 acts of violence and murder were reported directed against them on account of their heresy and supposed political designs.[1] It is stated that there has been only one instance of a Bābī denying his faith when brought before the judges; and he afterwards repented of his weakness, and paid the full penalty of death. The Bāb himself had been martyred at Tabriz in July, 1850. According to the accounts of his death given by eye-witnesses, the first firing-party of soldiers missed their aim, and only succeeded in severing the cords by which he was suspended; it was only on a second attempt being made by a new regiment that he fell dead, pierced by three bullets.[2]

Persecutions of Bābīs

The Bāb had nominated as his successor a certain

[1] In telegram to the *Times*, July 30, 1903; *CMSI*, 1903, pp. 690, 708 f., 768.

[2] The latter regiment was said to be Christian, a very improbable statement. There were only two volleys in all fired at the Bāb himself. See E. G. Browne, *New History*, pp. 301 and note, 306 f., and *ERE*, ii. p. 301b. His body was finally carried to Acre, and placed there in a tomb.

Mīrzā Yahyā, who received the name of Subh-i-Ezel, or 'Morning of Eternity,' born *c.* 1830–31 A.D. Him the Bābīs at once recognised as their spiritual head. His half-brother, however, Bahā'ullah, who appears to have acted as his amanuensis and intermediary in all communications with the outside world, put forward his own claims, and gradually succeeded in ousting Subh-i-Ezel from the first place. The latter was of a meditative and retiring nature, Bahā more practical and determined. On the outbreak of the great persecution in 1852 Subh-i-Ezel bent before the storm, and found refuge in Baghdād, where he was subsequently joined by his half-brother. Thence at the request of the Persian Government, who suspected them of political intrigue, the two men were removed in 1862–3 to Constantinople first, and towards the close of the latter year to Adrianople. Finally the estrangement and rivalry between the chiefs and their respective partisans became so acute that it seemed necessary to separate them. Adrianople also was becoming a centre of pilgrimage, to the annoyance of the Turkish Government. Subh-i-Ezel was sent to Cyprus, where he still lives (1912), with a few faithful adherents, under British protection. Bahā was exiled to Acre, and died there in May, 1892.

Schism after Death of the Bāb: Bahā

The eldest son of Bahā, 'Abbās or 'Abdu'l Bahā, 'servant of Bahā,' claimed the right of succession to his office and dignity, and to continue and extend the Divine Revelations as his father had added new teaching to that of the Bāb himself. The claim aroused difference of opinion and party spirit, the opponents of 'Abbās affirming that he was a mere 'servant of Bahā,' and

Bahāīs

that no new or independent Divine manifestation would take place for a thousand years. The opposition found a leader and head in Mīrzā Muhammad 'Alī, the younger brother of 'Abbās. The latter however seems to have steadily increased his authority and prestige.[1] The name of the Bāb has been almost entirely superseded by that of Bahā, whose writings, especially the Kitāb-i-Agdas,[2] form the text-books of the sect, widely read and studied. Bahāism claims to be a universal religion, and its emissaries have had considerable success in America, where the lead in missionary activity has been taken by Ibrāhim George Khayru'llah, a Syrian by birth, but a naturalised American citizen. There are also small communities of Bahāīs in Europe and in the East in India and Burma.[3] The Ezelīs maintain themselves in Persia, although in diminishing numbers and with decreasing influence. Even as early as 1887–88 Mr. E. G. Browne, travelling in that country, found that not only did the Bahāīs largely outnumber the Ezelīs, but that the writings of Bahā were studied to the almost entire exclusion even of those of the Bāb. There can be little doubt, however, that Subh-i-Ezel was on the whole more

[1] 'Abbās was reported to have been exiled from Acre by the Turkish authorities in 1905 on account of great building schemes, whereby he dominated the castle of the Turkish garrison.

[2] Published at St. Petersburg, with an historical introduction and translation in Russian, in 1899. An earlier selection from the writings of Bahā appeared at Bombay in lithograph in the year 1892, upon which is based the St. Petersburg text. See art. and review by E. G. Browne in *JRAS*, 1900, p. 354 ff.; *Actes, ut supra*, p. 99 f.

[3] E. G. Browne, in *ERE*, ii. p. 304 f.; E. Rosenberg, in *Trans. of the Third Intern. Congress for the Hist. of Religions*, vol. i. p. 321 ff.

true than Bahā to the primitive intention and teaching of the founder of the faith.[1]

Doctrines

One of the most striking prophecies to which Mīrzā ʿAlī Muhammad, the Bāb, had given utterance had been concerning 'Him whom God shall manifest,' his greatest successor, who should appear in due time, and establish truth and righteousness throughout the earth. Bahā claimed to be this new leader, and in support of his claim wrote and gave directions and uttered predictions which his disciples asserted to have been marvellously fulfilled. Just as Muhammad's teaching was in advance of that of the prophets before him, so the doctrines and authority of the Bāb have superseded Muhammad, and the revelation of Bahā has superseded that of the Bāb. There is a 'Divine' or 'Primal Light,' otherwise called the 'Universal Reason,' who becomes incarnate in the prophets; each prophetic revelation is

[1] The writer in the *Actes*, as cited above, p. 99 f., summarises the doctrine of the Bāb in its main principles as follows.

(1) Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān, is to be regarded as the sacred tongue.

(2) The new religion is to be propagated by force, in the conquest of the kingdoms of the world. In this the Bāb was merely following the example and repeating the directions of Muhammad.

(3) The Hajj pilgrimage is recommended.

(4) The acquisition of foreign, especially dead languages, those that are obsolete, is forbidden; similarly no study of profane sciences or books is allowed.

(5) The religion of the Bāb alone is in future to be recognised, and the profession of any other is forbidden.

If this is correct and adequate the original teaching of the Bāb made little advance in these respects upon that of the Prophet himself. It is essentially a modified or reformed Islām. The doctrines of Bahā, however, imply an altogether new religion, not so much a grafting upon the old, as its overthrow and supplanting by that which was essentially different.

accommodated to the age and capacity of the people to whom it is sent, and when it no longer suffices for the needs of the world a new revelation is granted. Thus the Divine or Universal Reason spoke in Abraham, in Moses, in Jesus Christ, in Muhammad, in the Bāb, and now in Bahā. Moreover, as the spirit of truth and light is in each age concentrated as it were in one man, who forms the 'Point of Light'; so it is necessary and inevitable that there should be a 'Point of Darkness,' one in whom the spirit of falsehood manifests itself in determined opposition to the spirit of light. This teaching however is distinctly opposed to the ordinary Muslim view, which looks upon the revelation of Muhammad as perfect and final. The Bābīs allow that Jesus Christ was the incarnate Son of God, and they study the Christian Scriptures. They assert however that the Bāb was the incarnate Lord returned to earth according to His promise, and upbraid Christians with their failure to recognise Him. Others, the adherents of Bahā, declare that he is the Christ the Son of God, and of these some, using language startling in its boldness, represent him to be the incarnate Father, the supreme God manifested in the flesh.[1]

[1] Compare the account given to Mr. Browne by the Bābīs themselves of the successive manifestations in the prophets:— 'The Lord Jesus was as a sun shining in the Fourth Heaven, which is the "Station of the Spirit." Muhammad was in the Fifth Heaven, which is the "Station of Reason." The *Nukte-i-Beyān*, "His Holiness our Lord the Supreme" (*i.e.* the Bāb), appeared yet higher in the Sixth Heaven, or "Station of Love." And Bahā, in whom all previous Manifestations find their fulfilment and consummation, occupies the Seventh or highest Heaven, and is a perfect Manifestation of the Unseen and Incomprehensible Essence of the Divinity.' *Year amongst the Persians*, p. 489.

The teaching of the Bābīs or Bahāīs in general is that God is eternal, and cannot be approached save through an intermediary in whom He manifests Himself. The Divine Attributes are of two classes, those of Grace and of Wrath; and the character of a dispensation is determined by the predominance of one or the other. As to the future they appear to hold that the physical body is finally dissolved at death, but that the spirit survives to receive reward or punishment according to its deserts. In manner of life they are simple and kindly, tolerant towards men of other faiths, and especially friendly to Christians.[1] Their character is moral and upright; courtesy, gentleness, and readiness to forgive are enjoined upon all; the sacred books are to be regularly studied, and prayer made three times a day. Religious warfare or *jihād* is forbidden; and a fast during the last month of the Bābī year is observed in place of the ordinary Muhammadan fast of Ramadhān. To their spiritual head they render unqualified devotion and obedience. It is stated that the only conversions to Christianity in Persia have been from among the members of this sect. They show the utmost freedom in intercourse with Europeans, when once their confidence has been gained, and they have reason to believe that they will be met

[1] A missionary of the C. M. S. of long experience of Persia reported that some of the Bahāīs had said to him, 'We are Christians'; others, 'We are almost Christians'; others, 'The only difference between us is that we accepted Christ when He came to us fifty years ago (*i.e.* in Bahā), and you rejected Him.' Sell, *Faith of Islām*[2], p. 152, note. The New Testament teaching on the Resurrection and Second Advent is interpreted figuratively, or it is claimed that prophecies with respect to the latter are fulfilled in Bahā. There have been instances of Jews and Parsīs who have become converts to Bahāism.

with sympathy and trust. The future of the sect it is impossible to predict. Their progress however up to the present time has been rapid. They have sent out missionaries and disseminated their teaching in Europe and the far West. And there seems no reason to doubt that if they can compose their internal differences and are faithful to the simplicity of the doctrines they have received, the influence they exert will be both widespread and lasting.[1]

The principle of *Jihād*, or Religious Warfare, is by some authorities exalted into a sixth Pillar of the Faith. Muhammad declared in the Qur'ān the duty of believers to fight against the infidels, until these either made their submission or were destroyed. The following are the chief passages to which reference is made. **Jihād**

'Fight in the cause of the Lord,' sūra ii. 245.

'Fight against them until there be no unbelief, and the religion be all of it the Lord's,' sūra viii. 40.

'When the sacred months are passed, then kill those who join gods with God wherever ye find them, and besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush; but if they repent and observe prayer and pay the obligatory alms, then let them go their way,' sūra ix. 5, the famous 'verse of the sword.'[2]

[1] See the articles quoted in the Reports of the Second and Third Congresses for the History of Religion; E. G. Browne, in *ERE*, ii. p. 299 ff. A brief recent account is by H. Dreyfus, *The Universal Religion, Bahaism*, 1909; cp. *Les Préceptes du Béhaïsme, traduit du Persan*, by the same, Paris, 1906.

[2] Prof. T. W. Arnold altogether denies the correctness of the inference usually drawn from these expressions, and points out that it has been maintained by Musalmāns themselves that all the wars of Muhammad were defensive, and therefore it cannot be believed that contrary to his own practice he would have

This injunction is understood to abrogate other verses which refer in a tolerant spirit to Jews and Christians.

Literally interpreted therefore these words make it incumbent upon every Muslim actively to bear arms against the infidels, until all are converted to Islām or at least reduced to a state of subjection. The point is of especial interest and importance to Great Britain because of the large number of Muhammadans in India, upon whom has often been urged by fanatical preachers the religious duty of rebelling, and warring against the established authority of the infidels.

All appears to turn practically upon the question whether India is in technical language *Dāru'l-Islām*, a 'land of Islām,' or a 'land of the enemy,' *Dāru'l-Harb*. In the latter case rebellion is not only lawful but an absolute duty; although, according to some authorities, with the important qualification, only if there be a reasonable probability of success. The name *Dāru'l-Islām*, however, is not confined to the countries under the direct rule of the Khalīf, but is extended to those in which, while the infidels bear sway, yet no restraint is placed upon Muslims in the exercise of their religion. In such lands it is

enjoined aggressive action or compulsory methods of conversion upon his followers. See the Appendix on Jihād in his *Preaching of Islām*, pp. 347–352; where the passages from the Qur'ān are collected in which the word *jihād*, or derivatives from the same root, are found. 'The meaning of the noun of action, jihād, is "the using, or exerting, one's utmost power, efforts, endeavour, or ability, in contending with an object of disapprobation," and it is obvious . . . that primarily the word bears no reference to war or fighting, much less to fighting against unbelievers, or forcible conversion of them, but derives its particular application from the context only.' Cp. Hughes, *Dict.*, *s.v.*, and article by W. R. Gardner in *Moslem World*, 1912, p. 347 ff.

generally agreed that jihād is unlawful; and most authorities place India in this category. The question has often been considered by Muhammadan jurists, and the decisions given have been neither very definite nor altogether consistent. But the majority incline to the view that in India, at least under present circumstances, it is not obligatory on Muslims to raise a religious war. Syed Amīr Ali, the leader of the reformed Muhammadan party in Bengal, has declared himself very strongly against the legality of jihād. There can be little doubt that among Muhammadans generally a more tolerant view in this matter tends to prevail.

Christianity and Muhammadanism

A few suggested thoughts on a comparison of Muhammadanism with Christianity may fitly close this brief review of a faith in interest and importance second to none. In their creeds and accepted articles of faith the two religions present striking points of similarity. Both are intensely monotheistic; and they have many beliefs in common, as for instance in prophets, in the resurrection, and in inspiration. It is when we proceed to examine the details of these beliefs that the wide divergence becomes manifest. The doctrines, while nominally the same, are expounded, as we have seen, in entirely different ways. The belief in prophets and the prophetical gift may serve as an example. Both faiths regard the series of prophets and of revelation as closed, with Muhammad or with Christ; Muhammadans reject Christ, while Christians deny the claims of Muhammad. But the respective conceptions of the prophetic office, its character, limitations, rights, and authority,

are altogether distinct. It is on the ethical side however that the widest divergence is seen. The moral teaching of the Qur'ān is far below that of the New Testament. While in some points the regulations introduced by Muhammad are to be praised, for example his prohibition of wine and games of chance; and while as a whole his teaching was undoubtedly above the ordinary level of his day as it concerned itself with morality, the encouragement given in the Qur'ān to the indulgence of sensual passion, the sanction of polygamy, the intolerance and vindictive spirit displayed towards opponents, stand in the greatest possible contrast to the mind of the gospels and of Christ. Even to the distinct commands of their Prophet Musalmāns generally, as little as Christians, are able to plead that they have been altogether faithful.

The lines also of the Muhammadan religion, as laid down by Muhammad himself, are rigid and final in a sense in which the Christian system is not, and was never intended to be. It is the boast of Islām that it is always the same, inflexible, neither requiring nor capable of adaptation. The regulations suited for Arabian tribal society in the seventh century must be imposed in the letter on all men of every country and age. No liberty is allowed, no freedom of either thought or action; advance and accommodation is only possible by denying the principles of the faith, as formulated by its recognised exponents and leaders. The rule and law of Islām as hitherto interpreted condemns it to lag behind in the race of progress and in the search for light. That a movement for regeneration and quickening should exercise so wide an influence and command the support of so many of the foremost

men in rank and knowledge is the most hopeful sign of the times.

Finally it is worth recalling that besides Christianity Islām is the only great missionary religion, and to a large extent employs the same agency, that of itinerant preachers. The third powerful missionary faith, Buddhism, that once extended itself with a rapidity greater perhaps than either of these, has long since ceased to propagate its beliefs by any such means. Islām, although it has used other than peaceful methods to secure its own predominance, has never been without its ardent missionaries, who sometimes at the peril of their lives have sought to spread the doctrines of Muhammad, and have called on men to accept his authority. Such missionaries, especially of the Sanūsīyah order,[1] are still going forth, without organisation, it is true, or powerful society in their support, issuing no reports and rendering no account of their work; but notably in Africa, and on a smaller scale elsewhere, they are meeting with no inconsiderable success. It is in this field perhaps that the rivalry of the two faiths is likely to become more acute in the future.

Missions of Islām

[1] *supra*, p. 862 f.; E. Sell, in *CMSI*, Jan. 1899, p. 6. A Conference of Muhammadan missionary workers, modelled on a Christian Conference, was held at Lucknow in the year 1907.

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